

# CITY OF MOUNT VERNON

## *DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE*

June 13, 2014





---

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## ***City of Mount Vernon***

520 Main Street  
Mount Vernon, IN 47620  
John Tucker, Mayor

## ***Mount Vernon Redevelopment Commission***

Judy Winiger  
Ed Adams  
J. Michael Ashworth  
John Gerton  
Larry Williams  
Mark Isaac, advisory member

## ***Mount Vernon Working Group***

Mike Ashworth  
Dana Allyn  
Johnna Denning  
Dan Funk  
Brittaney Johnson  
Brian Jeffries  
Cindy Naab  
Tom Russell  
Sue Yeida  
Judy Winiger

## ***Consultant***

American Structurepoint  
7260 Shadeland Station  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46256  
317.547.5580  
[www.structurepoint.com](http://www.structurepoint.com)



AMERICAN  
**STRUCTUREPOINT**  
INC.

---

DRAFT

---

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **1 - Introduction**

Purpose of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan Update.....	3
Project Background .....	3
Location .....	4
City of Mount Vernon.....	4
Mount Vernon History .....	6

## **2 - Downtown Profile (Study Area Conditions and Analysis)**

Focus Area .....	9	<b>Maps</b>
Context, Attractions, Anchors .....	9	10
Parking.....	17	11
Circulation & Gateways .....	17	12
Ownership.....	17	13
Land Use .....	18	14
Zoning.....	19	15
Downtown Identity .....	20	16
Recent Accomplishments .....	22	23
Current Projects/Initiatives .....	22	23
Demographic Analysis.....	24	
Previous Related Planning Efforts .....	28	
Downtown Profile Summary (Opportunities and Constraints).....	32	

## **3 - Master Plan Foundation**

Vision .....	37
Goals .....	37
Community Outreach .....	38
Workshop Results.....	38

## **4 - Master Plan Concept**

Master Plan Concept.....	48
Conceptual Land Use Diagram.....	48
Illustrative Site Plan .....	49

## **5 - Action Plan**

Strategy Matrix .....	56
Critical Path Strategies .....	57
Action Plan.....	58-67



A large, light gray, stylized number '1' that serves as a background element, extending from the top left towards the bottom right of the page.

# **INTRODUCTION**





## Introduction

### ***Purpose of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan Update 2014***

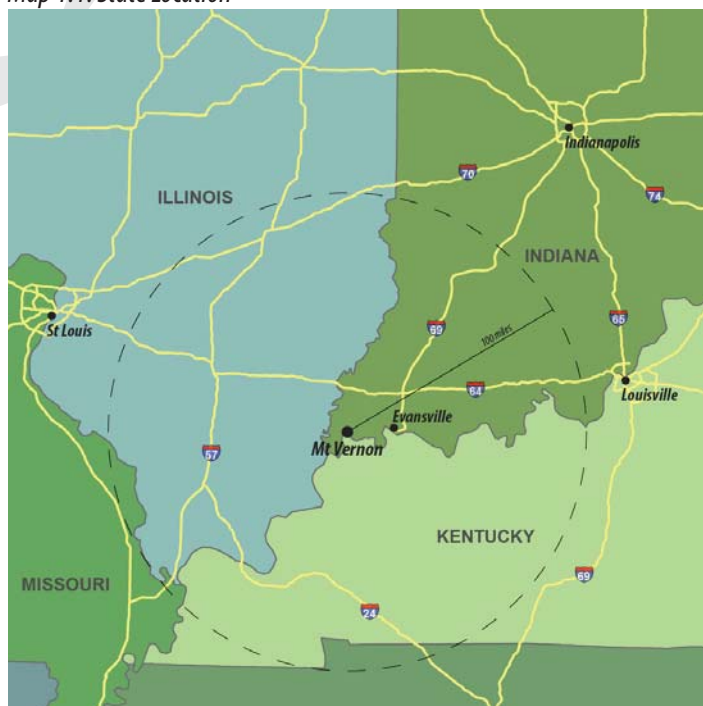
The *City of Mount Vernon Downtown Redevelopment Plan Update* (referred to as the *Plan*) establishes a foundation for future decision-making regarding physical and policy recommendations for downtown Mount Vernon. As an update to the *City of Mount Vernon Downtown Redevelopment Plan 2005*, this document presents an update to the vision, goals, and action items to reflect the changes in conditions, initiatives, goals. Many projects have been completed, or partially completed, while some of projects have been postponed due to lack of funding, change in the communities' priorities, or change in the market. Many of the projects that did not follow through as expected were postponed due to unforeseen changes in the economy beginning in 2008.

The purpose of this Plan is to benefit the public health and welfare of the citizens and visitors of the City of Mount Vernon; increase the economic well-being of the city; and serve to protect and increase property values in the city and Posey County. The Plan is designed to assist and direct investment and revitalization of the riverfront; create a safer downtown; attract new housing and residential opportunities; return properties and buildings to functional reuse; install infrastructure like improved lighting, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and enhanced telecommunications; make the current parking in the city more efficient, and easier to use; and increase employment opportunities for the citizens of the city, all while preserving the historical character and small town feel Mount Vernon was once known for. This Plan is intended to guide appropriate, market-viable, context-sensitive development in Downtown Mount Vernon to achieve the vision of Downtown Mount Vernon.

### ***Project Background***

*City of Mount Vernon Downtown Redevelopment Plan 2005* was created to identify projects, strategies and policies to guide development and reinvestment. This update, the *City of Mount Vernon Downtown Redevelopment Plan Update 2014*, is intended to update the strategies based on level of completion and next steps, as well as, changes in the physical environment, market conditions, and leadership. Over the past few years, Mount Vernon has engaged in many community planning efforts and implemented critical projects to begin to gain momentum for continued success and realization of the Mount Vernon vision. The creation of a tax increment finance district (TIF) as well as the completion of the Riverfront Park and The Landing are major endeavors and projects that have positioned Mount Vernon for additional success.

Map 1.1: State Location



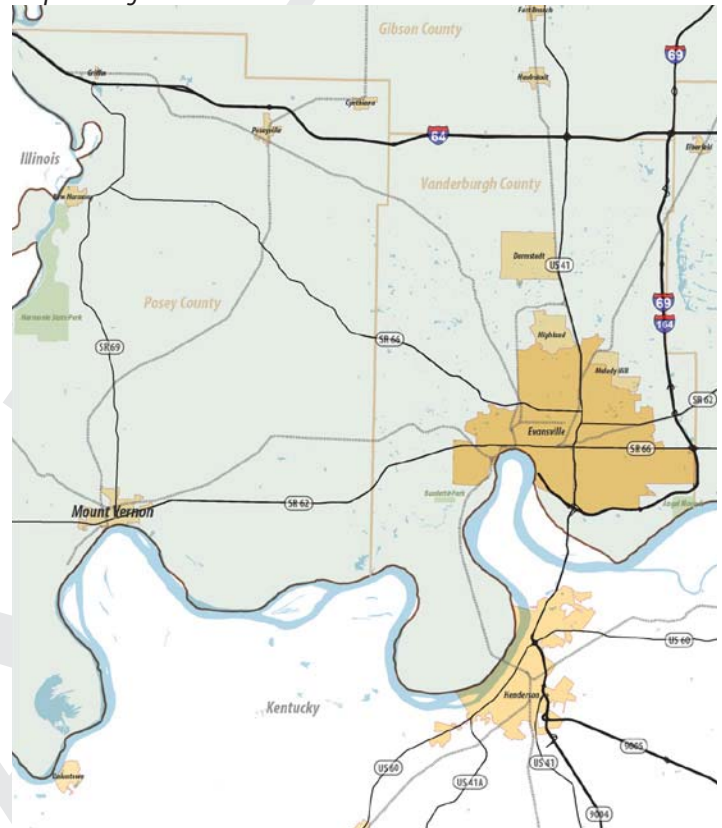
Location of Mount Vernon in relation to four major metropolises.

## Location

Mount Vernon is located in Posey County, in the southwestern most corner of Indiana along the Ohio River. The City is situated in the geographic center of Louisville, St Louis, Nashville, and Indianapolis. It is approximately 140 miles to drive to Louisville, 150 miles to St Louis, 170 miles to Nashville, and 190 miles to Indianapolis. The largest city nearby is Evansville. Access to Interstate 69 is located approximately 20 miles east of Mount Vernon. Access to Interstate 64 is located approximately 20 miles to the north, just north of New Harmony, and Interstate 57 in Illinois lies 66 miles to the west. Mount Vernon is home to the Southwind Maritime Center, also known as Port of Indiana - Mount Vernon. It is one of three ports in the state, and is one of the largest for distribution of coal in the US.

Nearby attractions include the Ohio River, the Wabash River, Harmonie State Park, Hovey Lake Game and Wildlife Reserve, Cypress Swamp Conservancy, and Twin Swamps. Mount Vernon is in close proximity to the Wabash Lowlands Wetland Area, and the Shawnee National Forest in Illinois. The Ohio River Scenic Byway traverses through the city, as does the American Discovery Trail, which connects Maryland to California on a bicycle friendly route. Other attractions in Mount Vernon include Sherburne Park along the riverfront which includes an amphitheater and bike trail. There is also the Posey County Courthouse, Western Hills Country Club, and the Wolfgang Orchestra and Chorus.

Map 1.2: Regional Location

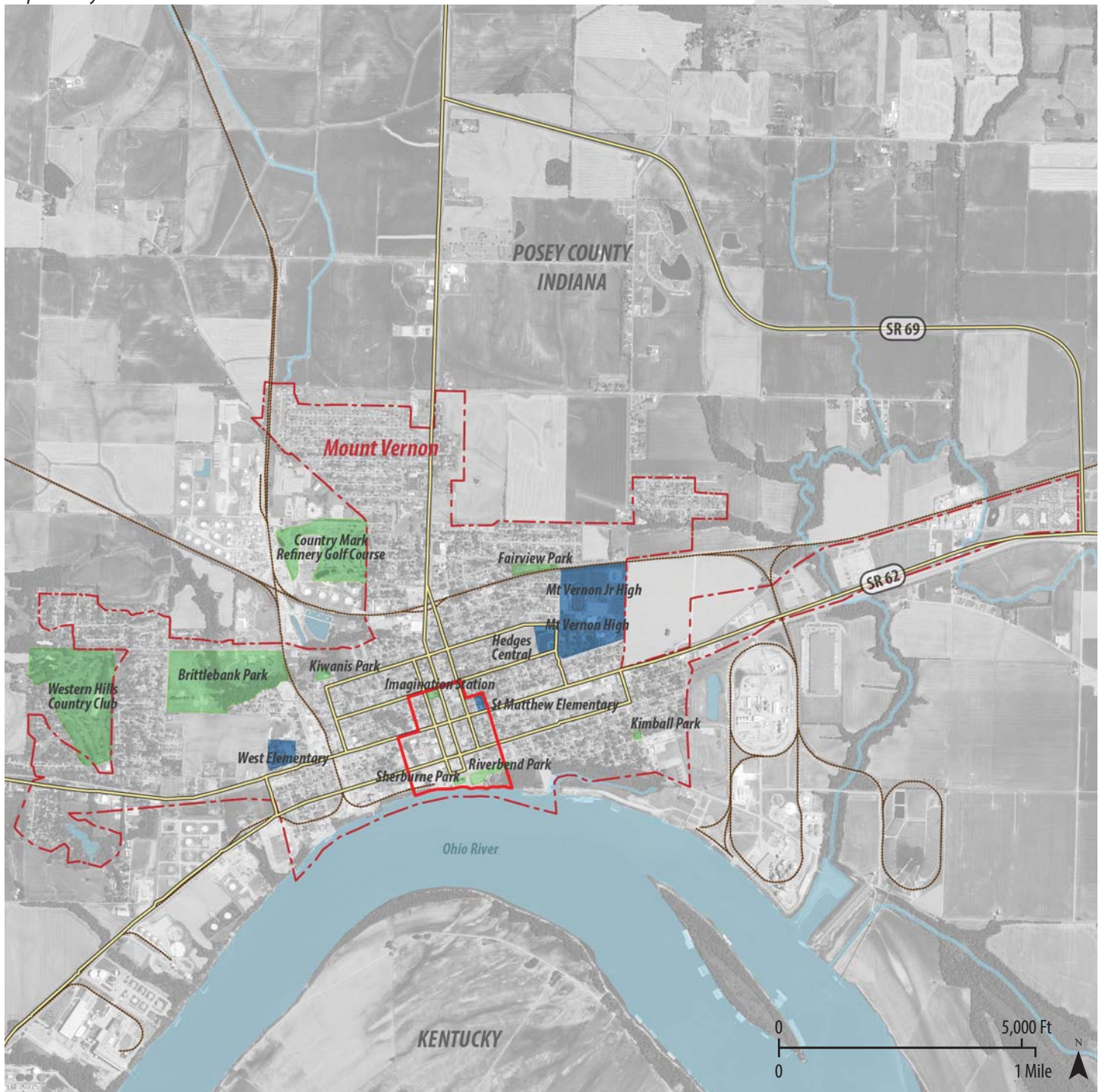


Location of Mount Vernon in relation to Evansville and Posey County.

## City of Mount Vernon

The City of Mount Vernon is approximately 2.9 square miles with a population in 2012 of 6,609 people, down from 6,687 in 2010, and 7,478 from 2000. It is served by the Metropolitan School District of Mount Vernon, with two elementary schools within the city limits, including the middle and high school. There are seven official parks within the city including Brittlebank park and pool, Fairview Park, Kimball Park, Kiwanis Park, Sherburne Park, Riverfront Park, and the imagination station at College Park. Newly added to the context of the city is the Riverfront park and amphitheater. There are two golf courses, the Western Hills Country Club, and the smaller Country Mark Co-op Refinery Golf Course.

Map 1.3: City of Mount Vernon



## Legend

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Roads         |  Parks / Golf Courses |
|  Rail          |  Focus Area           |
|  Hydrology     |  City Limits          |
|  Institutional |  |





## History

Mount Vernon has deep roots in agriculture and Ohio River activities. Since the settling of Posey County in the early 1800's, generations of hardy pioneers and modern day Hoosiers have lived in Mount Vernon and the surrounding countryside. Industries have grown and in some cases, have died off or have been replaced by new ones. Grain milling, oil refining and river transportation have been long lived. Ax handle manufacturing, steam thresher manufacturing and soda pop bottling have come and gone.

Originally settled as McFadin's Bluff in 1806, Mount Vernon later got its current name in 1815 in honor of George Washington. It originally began as a frontier trading post for European settlers along the Ohio River. Due to its location along the river, Mount Vernon grew into a shipping port which used grain and produce from the agricultural areas of the county. These products were then brought to port in Mount Vernon to be shipped to the Southern half of the United States. The shipping port grew to support industries such as flour, paper, saw mills, foundries, and canning factories. The growth of Mount Vernon due to its utilization as a shipping port helped it become the county seat in 1825, as it was seen to be ideally located for future economic growth.

- 1806 - Settled - First log cabins are built
- 1810 - First grist-mill in operation
- 1811 - First operational ferry
- 1815 - Name changed to Mount Vernon
- 1820 - First Hotel built
- 1825 - Mt Vernon named County Seat
- 1830-1850 - Milling companies growth
- 1833 - Hoop-pole fight
- 1847 - Hovey house built
- 1863 - High ranking officer Alvin P. Hovey distinguished at Battle of Champion's Hill
- 1867 - Mt Vernon assumes responsibility of city government
- 1870 - Rail starts to enter, boosting all industries
- 1873 - Cholera Epidemic
- 1876 - Posey County Courthouse completed
- 1888 - Hovey elected Indiana's twentieth Governor
- 1893 - Old City Hall built
- 1926 - Posey County Memorial Coliseum built
- 1937 - Great Flood



# **DOWNTOWN PROFILE**



## ***Existing Conditions***

### ***Focus Area***

The focus area for the Downtown Redevelopment Plan Update has been slightly modified from the 2005 plan. The focus area is roughly 80 acres and covers 22 blocks of the downtown area. It is bounded by 6th Street on the north, Mulberry Street on the east, the Ohio River on the south, and Chestnut Street on the west. The key intersection in this area, with the most traffic, is located in the center of the focus area on the northwest corner of the courthouse. It is the intersection of SR62 (also 4th Street and the Ohio River Scenic Byway) and SR69 (also Main Street). The entire focus area falls within the newly established TIF District, which extends further east to Locust Street, and further north to Grant Street. The TIF District was formed to benefit the public health and welfare of the citizens of the City; increase the economic well-being of the City and the State of Indiana; and serve to protect and increase property values in the City and the State of Indiana. The Plan is designed to assist in developing the riverfront; create a safer downtown; attract new housing and residential opportunities; return properties and buildings to functional reuse; install infrastructure like improved lighting, parking, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and enhanced telecommunications; and increase employment opportunities for the citizens of the City.

### ***Context, Attractions and Anchors***

Mount Vernon has a number of anchors, local attractions, and regional attractions. Anchors include:

- Hedges Central (includes Parks and Recreation offices, Food Pantry, American Red Cross, Wolfgang Orchestra & Chorus)
- St Matthews School & Church
- Mayor's Office
- Post Office
- Posey County Courthouse

Local attractions include:

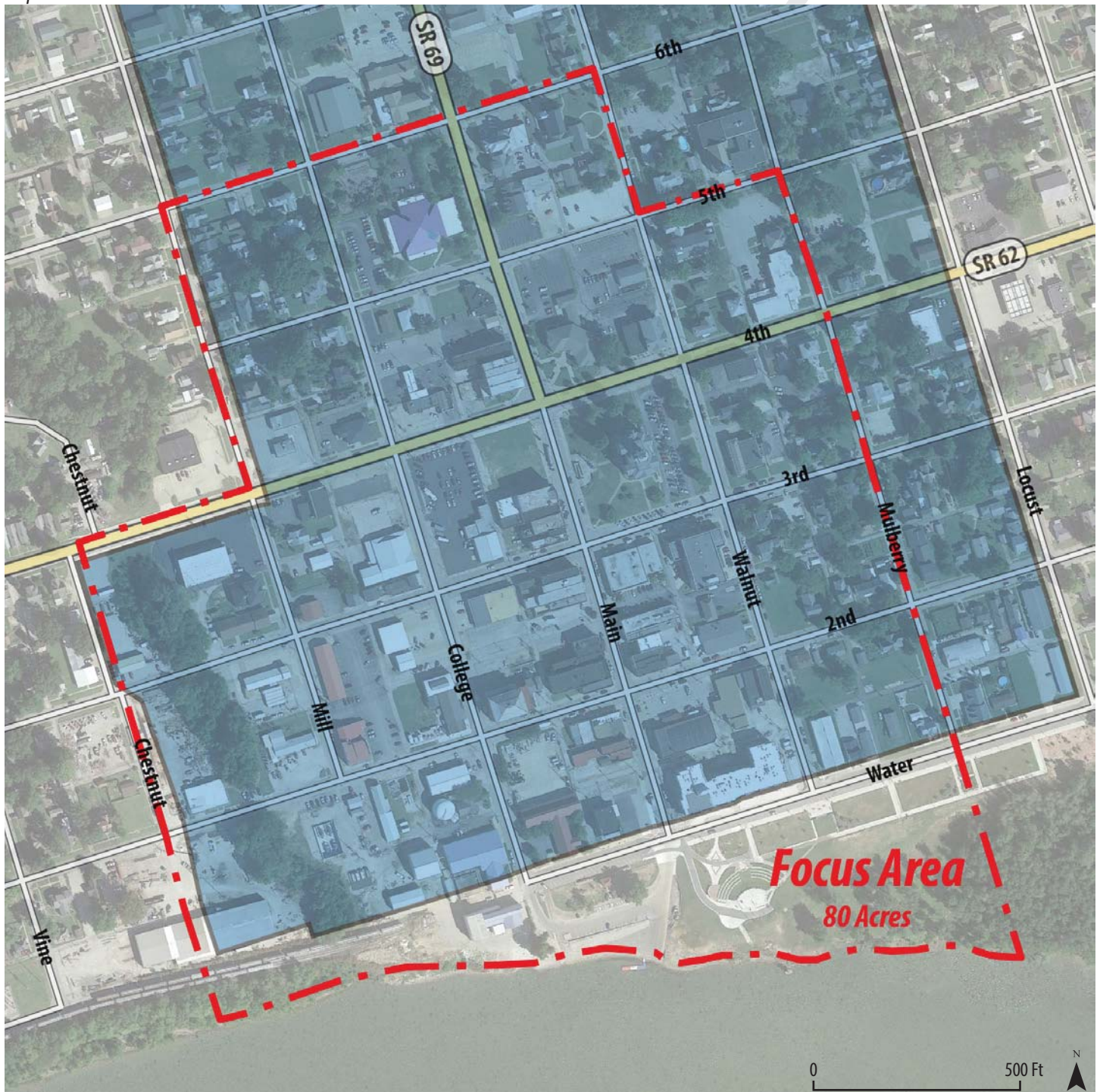
- Alexandrian Public Library
- Imagination Station at College Park
- Sherburne Park
- Posey County Courthouse

Regional attractions include:

- Hovey House
- Riverfront Park
- Ohio River
- Ohio River Scenic Byway



Map 1.4: Focus Area

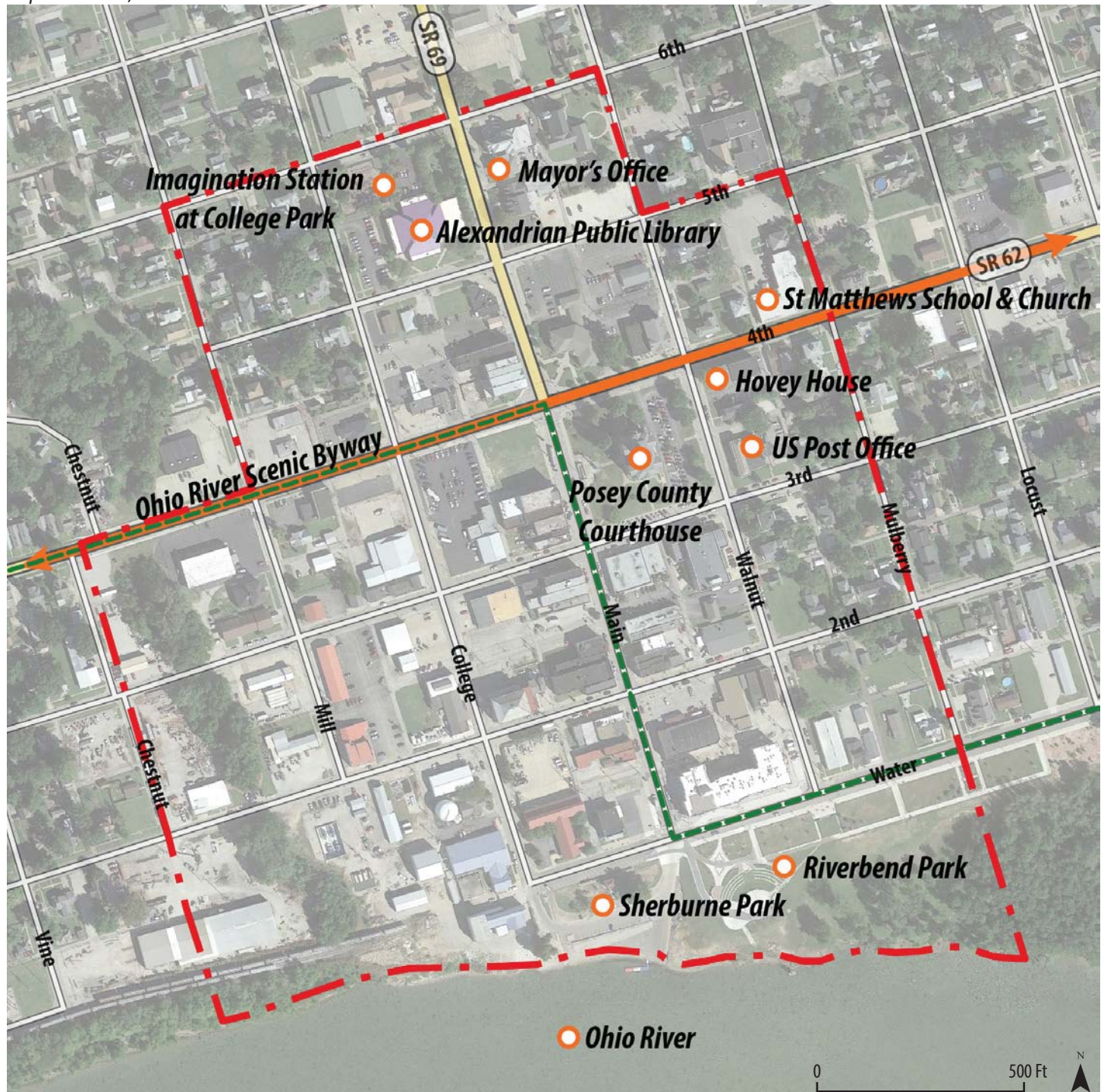


**Legend**

- State Roads
- Local Streets
- Established TIF
- Focus Area



Map 1.5: Context, Attractions and Anchors

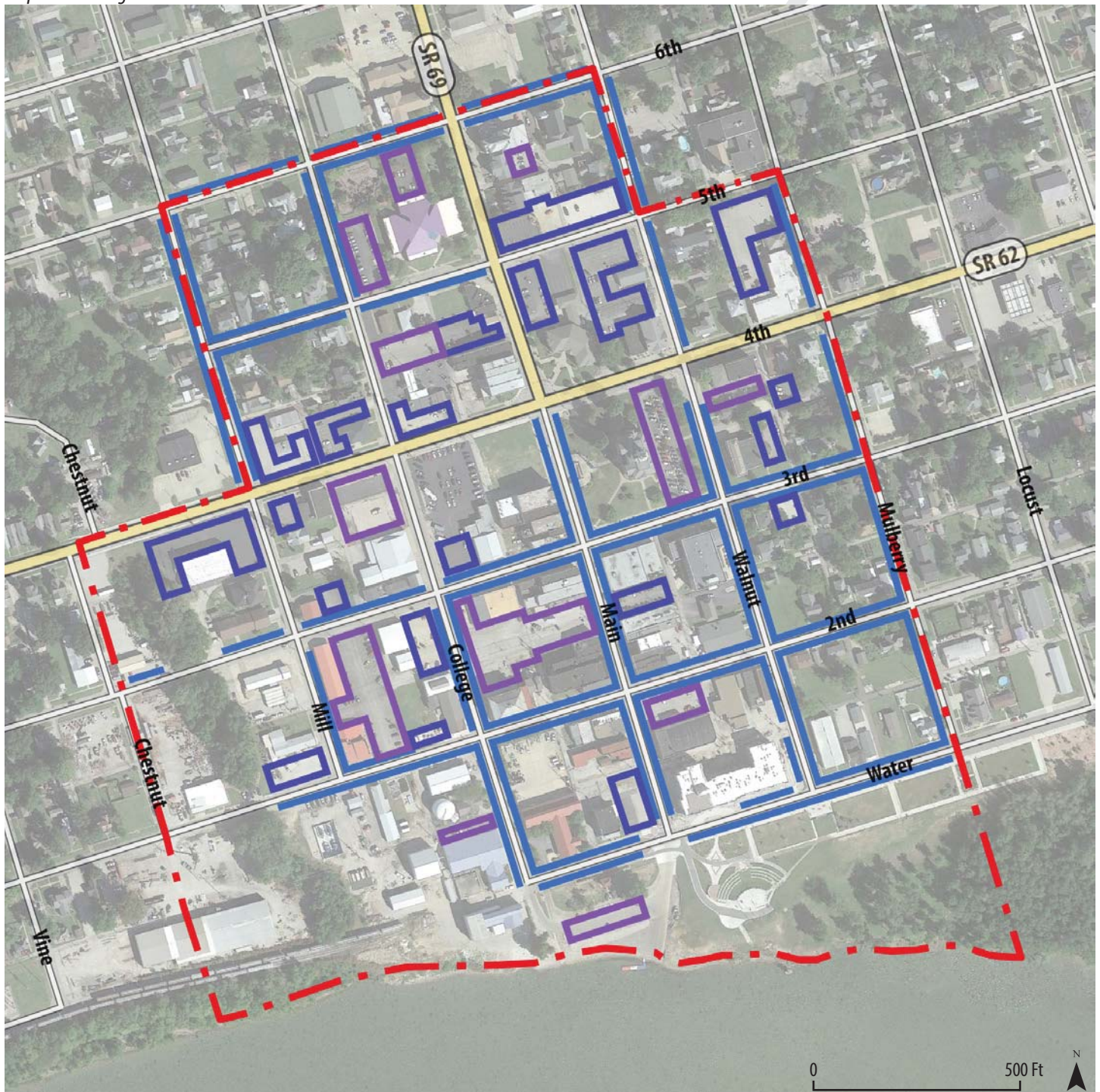


## Legend

- State Roads
- Local Streets
- Ohio River Scenic Byway
- - - American Discovery Trail
- Attractions and Anchors
- - - Focus Area



Map 1.6: Parking

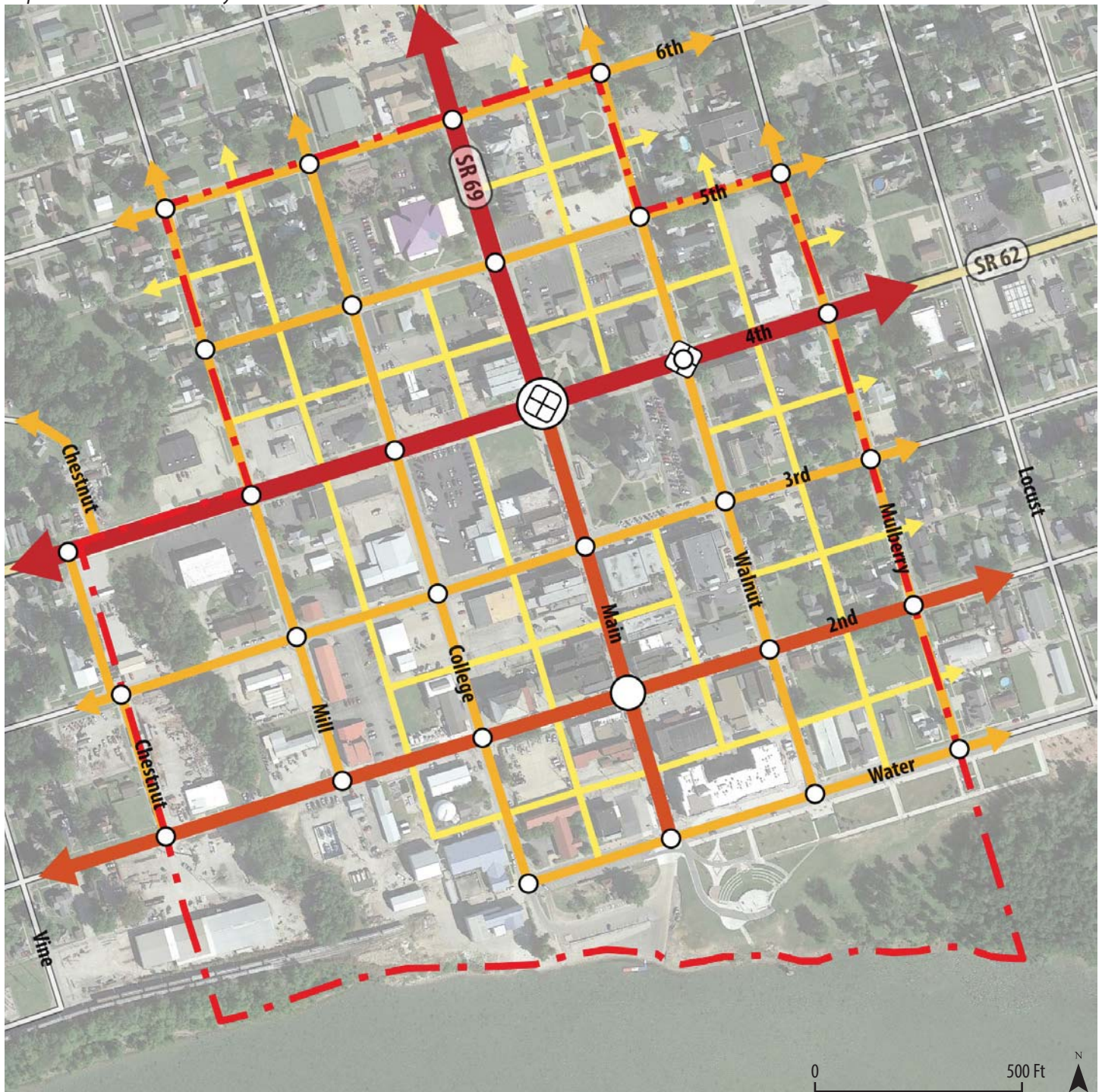


**Legend**

- State Roads
- Local Streets
- Public Lots
- Private Lots
- On-Street Parking
- Focus Area



Map 1.7: Circulation & Gateways

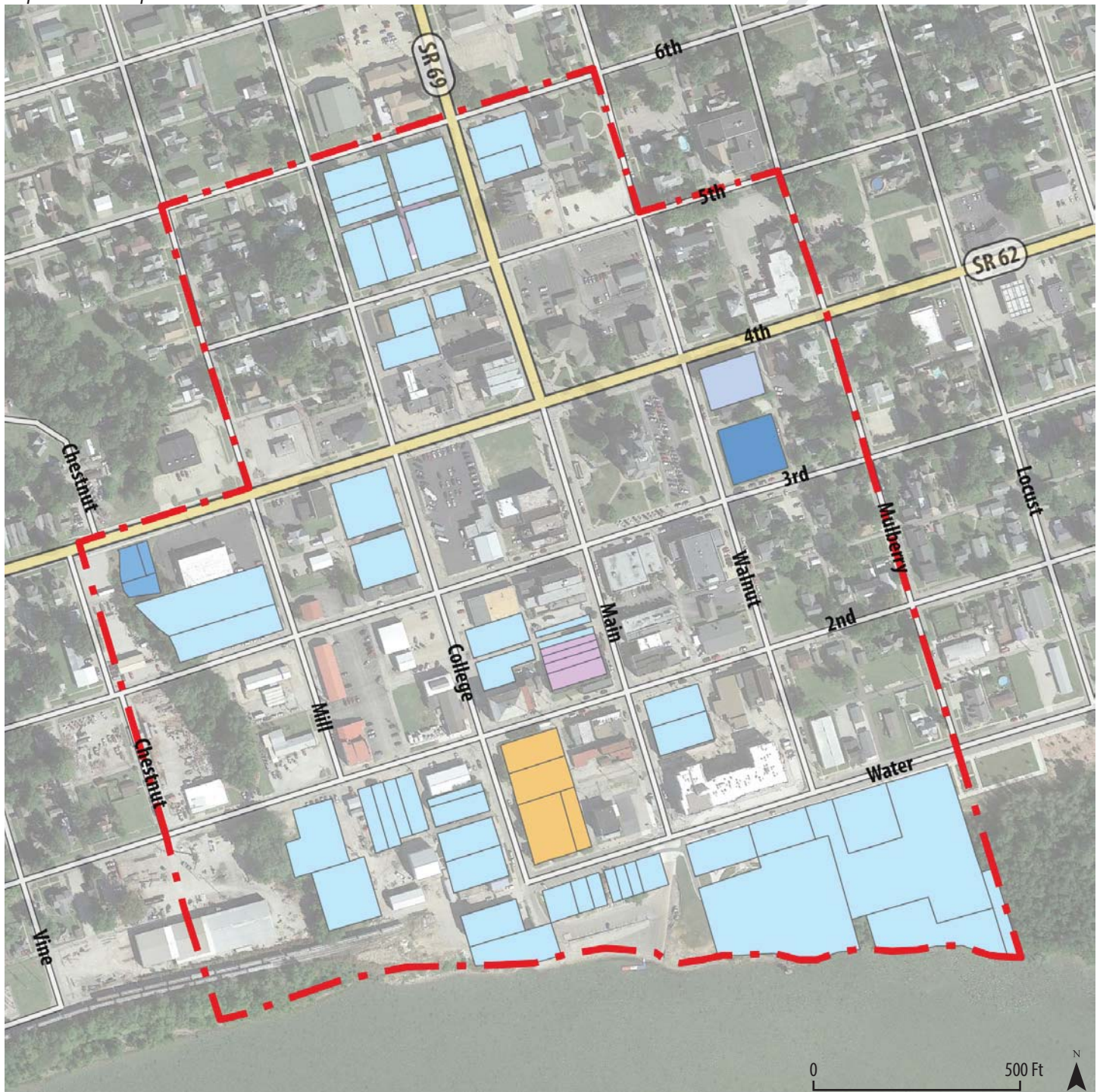


## Legend

- |                   |                   |                                 |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| State Roads       | Primary Streets   | Stop Light / Signaled Crosswalk |
| Local Streets     | Secondary Streets | Focus Area                      |
| Intersections     | Tertiary Streets  |                                 |
| Key Intersections | Alley             |                                 |



Map 1.6: Ownership

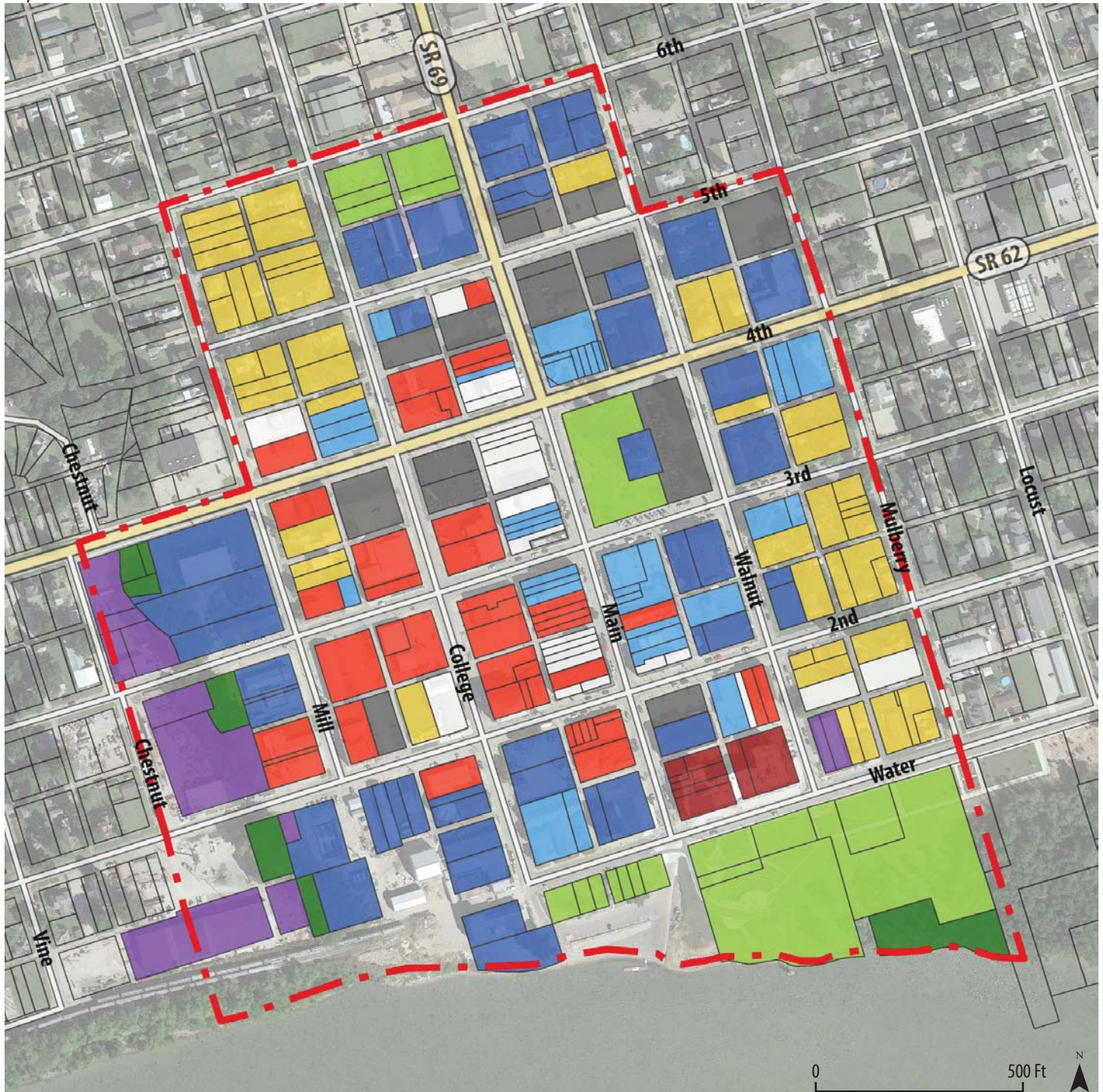


**Legend**

- |                              |                               |            |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| State Roads                  | City of Mount Vernon          | Focus Area |
| Local Streets                | Commissioners of Posey County |            |
| Southern, Ind Gas & Electric | State of Indiana              |            |
| Invest Mount Vernon, LLC     | USPS                          |            |



Map 1.6: Land Use

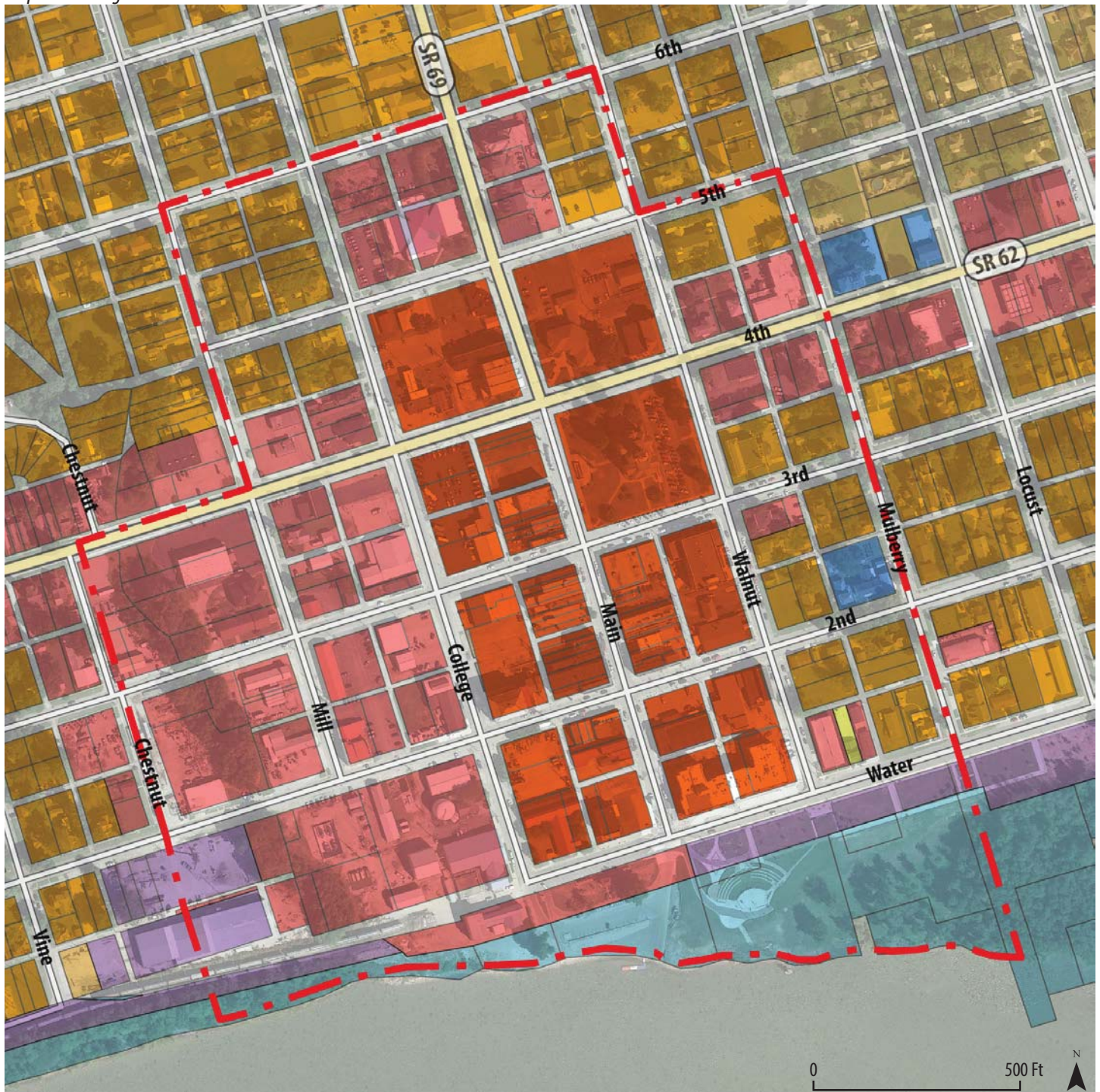


## Legend

State Roads	Residential	Open Space - Natural
Local Streets	Office	Open Space - Park
Commercial	Special Use	Surface Lot
Mixed Use	Industrial	Vacant



Map 1.6: Zoning



**Legend**

- |                       |                        |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| State Roads           | FH Flood Hazard        | RS Single Family |
| Local Streets         | M1 Manufacturing Light | Focus Area       |
| CBD Central Business  | O Office               |                  |
| CG Commercial General | RM Multifamily         |                  |

### ***Parking Analysis***

In this focus area of downtown Mount Vernon, there are roughly 320 public spaces scattered among 11 lots and roughly 480 private spaces scattered between 19 lots. Private lots are considered to serve private businesses, including businesses that serve the public and private offices. These businesses tend to restrict parking for their business only, and limited parking is allowed in these lots after hours. This focus area also has roughly 730 on street parking spaces, lining both sides of most of the local streets traversing the area. Some areas are clearly designated as parking, and clearly marked with paint. Most other areas are not clearly signed, and no markings are found, causing drivers to park on grassy areas between the street and sidewalk. The lack of curbs in many areas causes the street to encroach onto those planting strips, further elevating the perception that there is room for parking.

### ***Circulation & Gateways***

Mount Vernon is at the crossroads of two State Routes (SR 69 and SR 62). These major roads form the main intersection in the city at the northwest corner of the courthouse. This intersection sees large quantities of traffic traveling to or from Evansville, or north to I-64 (or New Harmony along the way). With the nearby location of one of Indiana's three ports, this intersection is heavily used by truck traffic. Main Street extends south from this intersection to the Ohio River and the two parks that line its banks (Riverfront Park, and Sherburne Park). 2nd Street is a secondary street, traveled by locals, and collecting traffic from tertiary streets and alleys. Mount Vernon is laid out on a grid pattern with tertiary streets forming the blocks, and alleys cutting through them.

Gateways include recent sign additions to SR62 entering the city. The main intersection of 4th and Main acts as a major gateway to the downtown area, as the Ohio River is very visible from this location, as well as the Posey County Courthouse.

### ***Ownership***

The city owns a number of parcels within the downtown focus area. These properties largely consist of the following: Riverfront Park, Sherburne Park, the Mount Vernon Water Works, the Alexandrian Library, and the Mayor's offices. Other properties in the area owned by the city are currently slated for development. Southern Indiana Gas (now Vectren) owns, but has recently vacated a property across Water Street from Sherburne Park. This property and buildings will be renovated and converted into a community center. A limited Liability Company, Invest Mount Vernon, owns four properties along Main Street consisting of buildings including the Stinson Brothers building. These buildings are dilapidated and desperately in need of repair. Posey County owns the courthouse square, as well as the Hovey House property. The state owns a portion of area on 4th street encompassing a portion of the drainage ditch. The US post office owns property just east of the Courthouse.

### ***Land Use***



---

The focus area has a strong mix of land uses, but there are holes in the contiguity of active uses. Vacant properties line Main Street, and with the dilapidated condition of many of the other buildings along Main Street, more vacant properties are likely to appear. There is a variety of Commercial and office uses centrally located, including Special Uses, including institutional, government, and city services. These three uses along with some parking and open space, form the core eight blocks of downtown Mount Vernon along Main Street. The green space around the courthouse adds some natural features into the mix. Residential areas are found along the edges of the focus area, along with a new mixed use development called The Landing along Water Street. Industrial uses are located primarily west of the drainage ditch between Mill Street and Chestnut Street, and a warehouse garage which occupies prime real-estate along Water Street.

### ***Infrastructure***

Infrastructure including water service, sanitary sewer, electrical and gas, cable and Internet services is well provided in the downtown area. The water department provides water for residents that exceeds the quality of many bottled waters, and has full coverage in this area. The wastewater department treats wastewater of the city, but is only responsible for the main sewer line. This line receives wastewater from homes and businesses, which are responsible for their own lateral lines. Several lift stations are in operation around the city in order to send waste to the main line when gravity doesn't permit a natural flow. Mount Vernon has recently overhauled its combined sewer collection system to eliminate the discharge from multiple combined sewer overflow sites, and included installing about 10,000 linear feet of new sewer lines and incorporating more environmentally friendly technology in the waste water treatment plant. Electric and gas service is provided by Vectren energy, and the focus area has full coverage.

### ***Zoning***

Zoning is the division of land by legislative statutes, codes, ordinances, or regulations into areas known as zones. Regulations are then imposed on each of these zones in order to achieve an overall vision and comply with a set of goals. In some cases, special zoning districts are set up to allow a separate set of rules to be imposed in order to include a mix of uses, and different limitations on permitted uses, which can either be stricter or more relaxed than the regulations they are trying to override.

This focus area encompasses three main zoning districts. The eight core blocks of downtown Mount Vernon are designated as Central Business District, extending from the river and Water Street to 5th Street. Adjacent to the core is the designation of Commercial General, and the rest is designated as Residential - Multifamily. A Flood Hazard area lines the Ohio River, which also includes some space designated as Manufacturing Light. There is one property designated as Office, and another designated as Residential - Single Family.



The Mount Vernon Zoning Ordinance defines the purpose of the designations in the area as follows:

**Residential - Multifamily:** designed to provide suitable areas for single family, two family and multifamily dwelling types in suitable environments in a variety of densities to meet the varying requirements of families

**Office:** designed to preserve and promote the development of efficient office facilities and to maximize the compatibility with other land uses

**Commercial General:** designed to accommodate existing development of mixed commercial uses which are will established, while providing a degree of protection to adjacent residential areas, and accommodate the grouping of certain commercial and light industrial uses which are compatible with one another

**Manufacturing - Light:** designed to provide an environment conducive to the development and conservation of modern manufacturing and scientific research facilities, and to provide areas suitable for manufacturing, wholesaling, warehousing, and other industrial activities which have no objectionable environmental influences

**Flood Hazard:** designed to guide development in order to reduces the potential for loss of life and property, reduce the potential for health and safety hazards, and to reduce the potential for extraordinary public expenditures for flood protection and relief

**Central Business District:** designed to allow the most intense use of land, without regard to the regulation of building height, floor area, land coverage or parking space requirements.

## Downtown Identity



W 3rd Street



Mayor's Office



E 5th Street



W 5th Street



W 5th Street



Governor Hovey House

## Downtown Identity

With numerous historical buildings in the downtown core, and being situated right on the Ohio River, Mt Vernon has a distinctive character that has strong potential to become something great. Heavier traffic travels along SR 62, and bypasses the downtown, and river front. There is strong potential to attract the drivers into the downtown area.





G

W 4th Street



H

Main Street



I

Main Street



J

College Avenue



K

Main Street



L

Posey County Court House



M

Walnut Street

---

### ***Recent Accomplishments***

Comprehensive Plan, Downtown marketing feasibility study, demolition of riverfront silos, long term control plan, phase 1, 2, and 3 Water system improvements, phase 1 Sewer improvements, phase 2 sewer improvements, river bend park, Riverview point, phase 1 Riverbend trail, phase 2 Riverbend trail, new lighting along river bend park, trees and lighting at riverfront park, the Landing, River Bend Trail Housing Extension, West Side Storm Water Improvements, West Elementary School Lighting, Redevelopment Plan, commission, and TIF district, Branding and marketing.

### ***Current Projects***

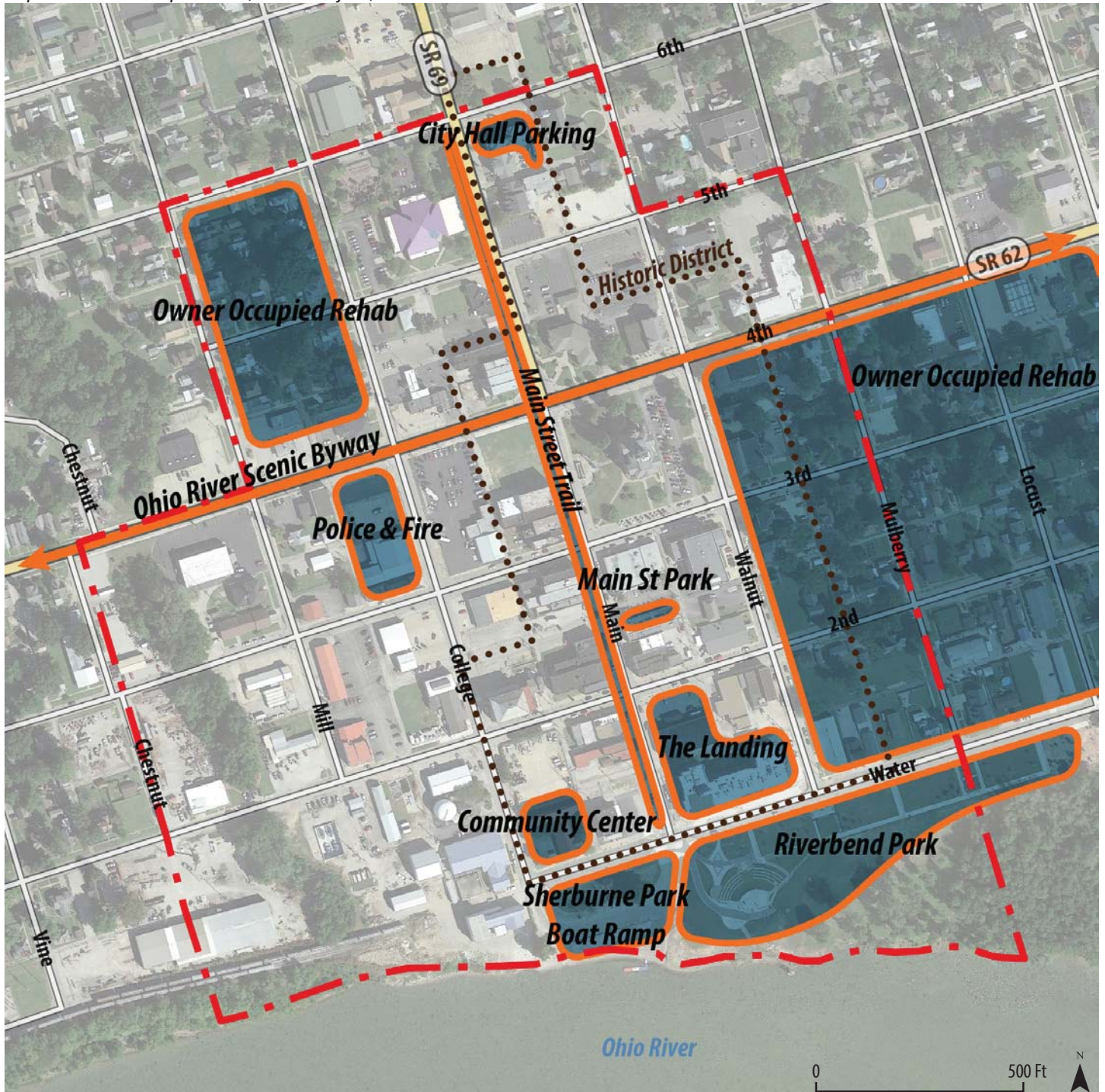
West Elementary School, River Bend Park Utility Building, Police and Fire Station, Imagination Station Revitalization, State Street Improvements, Phase 3 River Bend Trail, Downtown Redevelopment Plan of TIF, Main Street Designation, Country Terrace Sewer Improvements, City Operated Blight Elimination Program, Redevelopment of Downtown Abandoned Properties.

### ***Initiatives***

Phase 4 and 5 River Bend Trail, Residential Rehabilitation, Riverfront Community Complex, River Bend Courtyard, McFadin's Bluff, ATI building expansion, Redevelopment of Vacant lots, Transportation Planning.



Map 1.6: Recent Accomplishments, Current Projects, Initiatives



## Legend

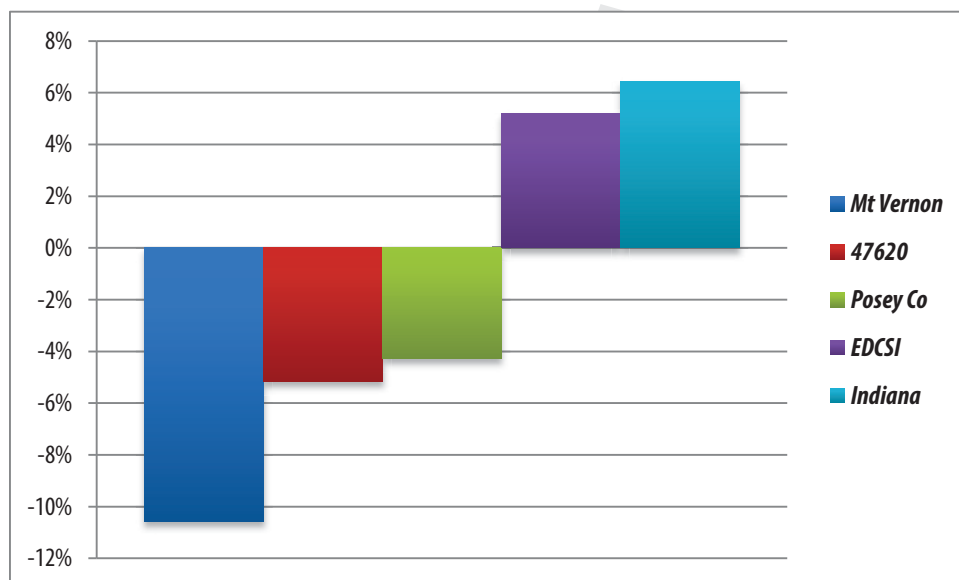
- State Roads
- Local Streets
- Recent / anticipated projects
- Focus Area

## Demographics

In order to show direct comparisons of different demographics of Mount Vernon and its surrounding areas, information was gathered for:

1. City of Mount Vernon
2. Mount Vernon zip code of 47620 (in order to capture outlying population, but people who are in proximity to services provided by the city)
3. Posey County
4. Economic Development Coalition of Southwestern Indiana (EDCSI) This is a four-county region, including Gibson, Posey, Vanderburgh, and Warrick Counties. It is included in this analysis in order to capture users of the Evansville Metropolitan Area.
5. Indiana

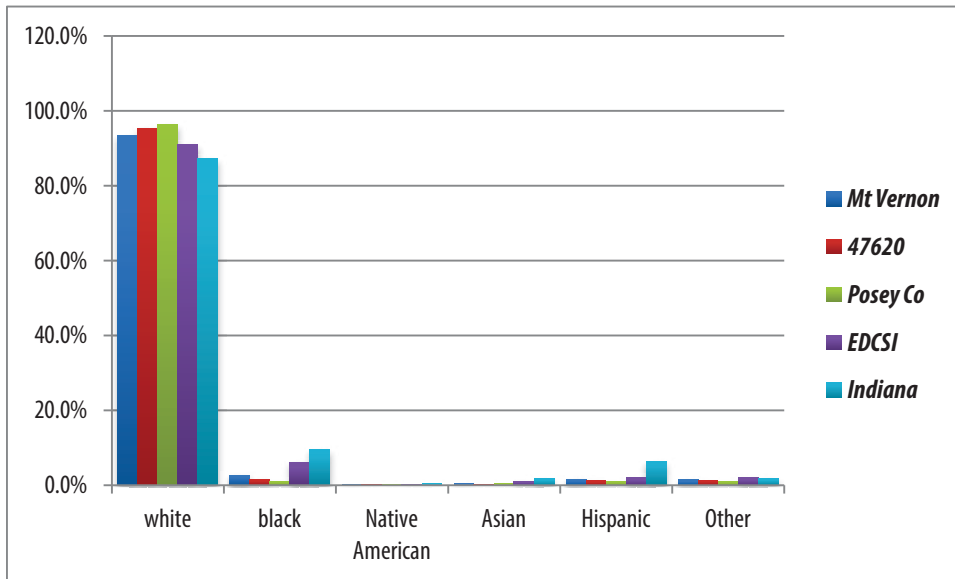
## Population



The total population of the City of Mount Vernon during the 2010 census was 6,687. This is a 11% decrease in population from 2000. The zip code area as well as Posey County also show decreases in population, whereas the EDCSI area as well as Indiana show a 5% and 6% increase, respectively. The population in the city is 26% of the county's 25,910 residents, and is in relation to the EDCSI area's 298,805 people. Unfortunately, predictions indicate additional decline in population between 2010 and 2020 for the area, while the EDCSI area is predicted to experience modest growth more in keeping with the trends of the state. This is relevant because it shows a trend of more people moving to urban areas, and away from rural places.

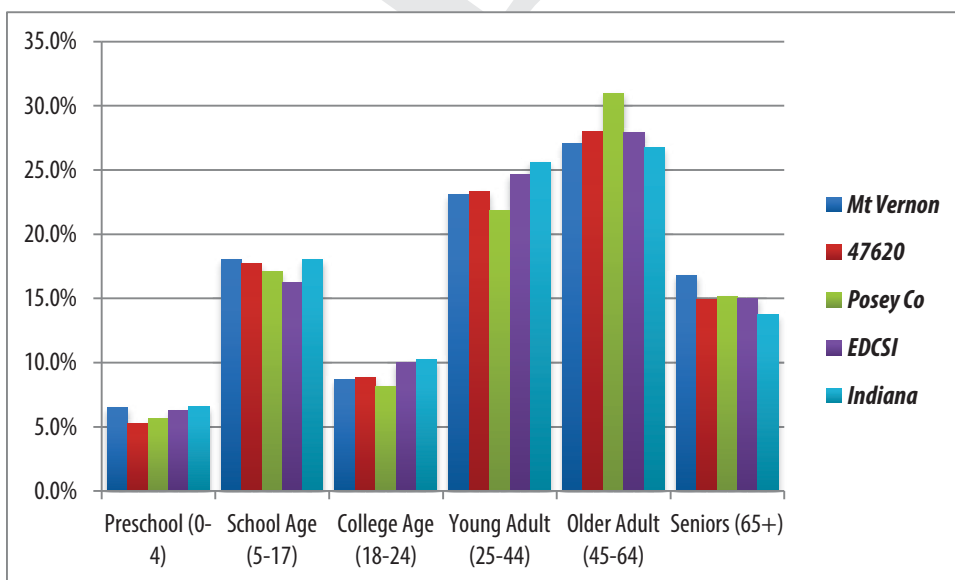
It is worth noting that the projections depicted herein are based upon past trends and do not account for the effects of redevelopment efforts within the focus area.

## Race Comparisons



The majority of the population in the area is white (93 percent) which mirrors demographics throughout Southwest Indiana. This is a much less diverse population than Indiana in general, which has a white population of 87 percent. The number of persons that identify themselves as Hispanic is also well below the state averages. This is relevant because the lack of diversity in this area reduces the number of opportunities for a variety of businesses. With this comes a lack of cultural diversity in the area, a smaller workforce, and a smaller draw for other races to come visit, live, or work.

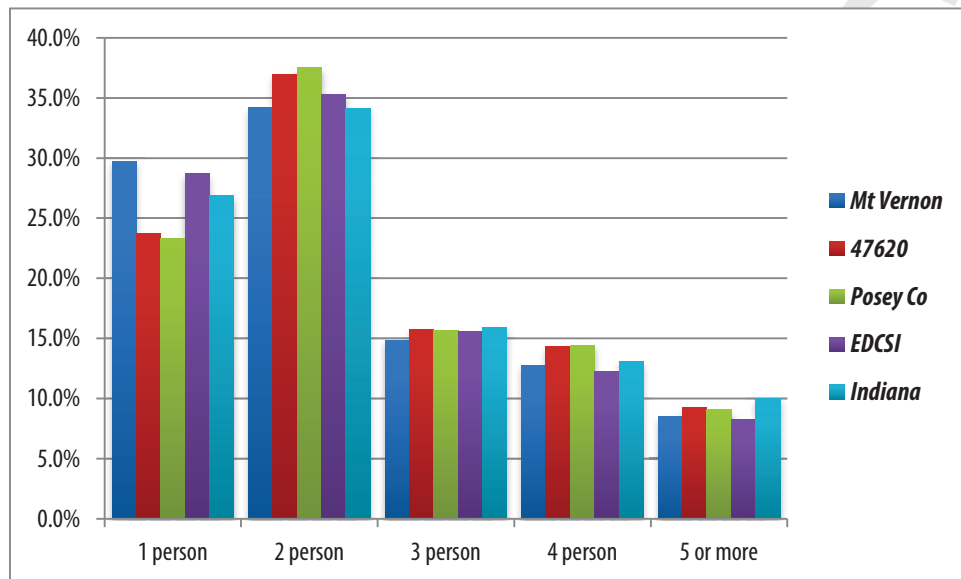
## Age Comparisons



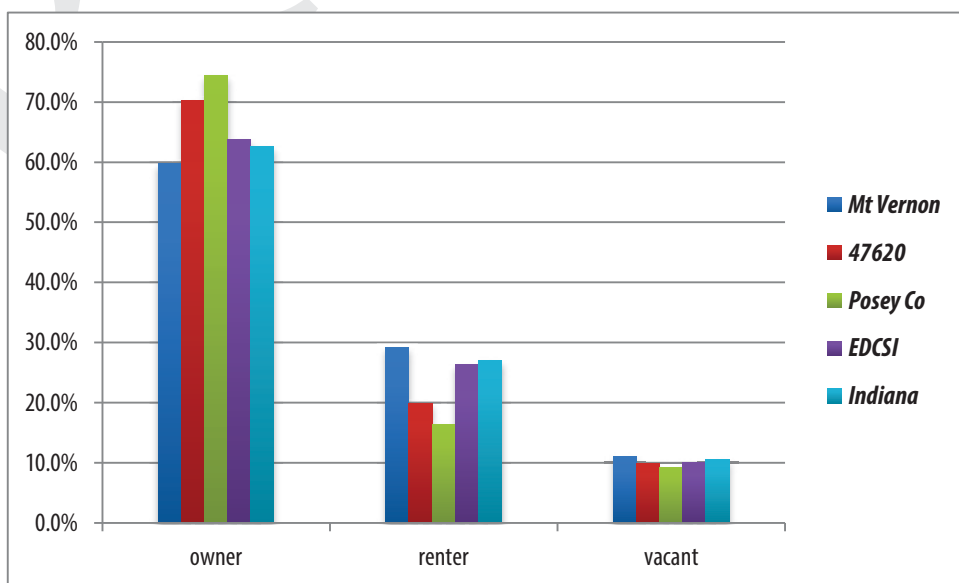


The median age of the area is 39 years old. This is slightly above the median age in Indiana which is 37 years. The median age in the area is projected to rise throughout the next 10 years, which suggests that current residents will most likely stay in the area, while their younger children are projected to move away. It can be noted that the population of College Age students is significantly lower across the board.

### Household Size and Housing Units

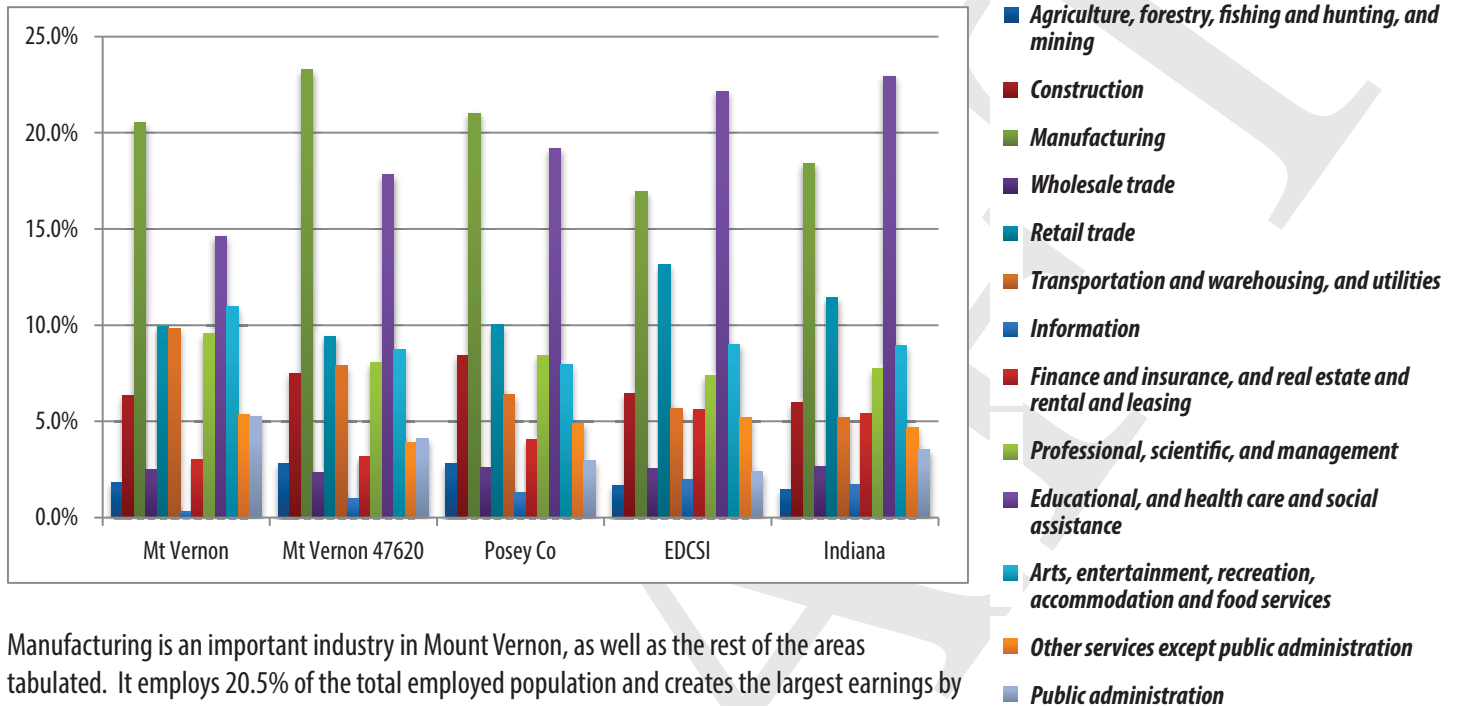


As of 2010 there were 2,736 households within the city of Mount Vernon. Like population, it is projected that the number of households will slowly decrease over the next ten years. Likewise median household size is expected to decrease while the median age of the householder will increase. Although this trend of aging households is expected to continue, this bodes well in terms of potential spending power in the short term. It can also be noted that of the total households, there are 1,839 that are owner occupied (lower than all other demographic areas tabulated), and 897 that are renter occupied (higher than all other demographic areas tabulated). This leaves a gap of 341 houses that are vacant, which is the highest across the board.

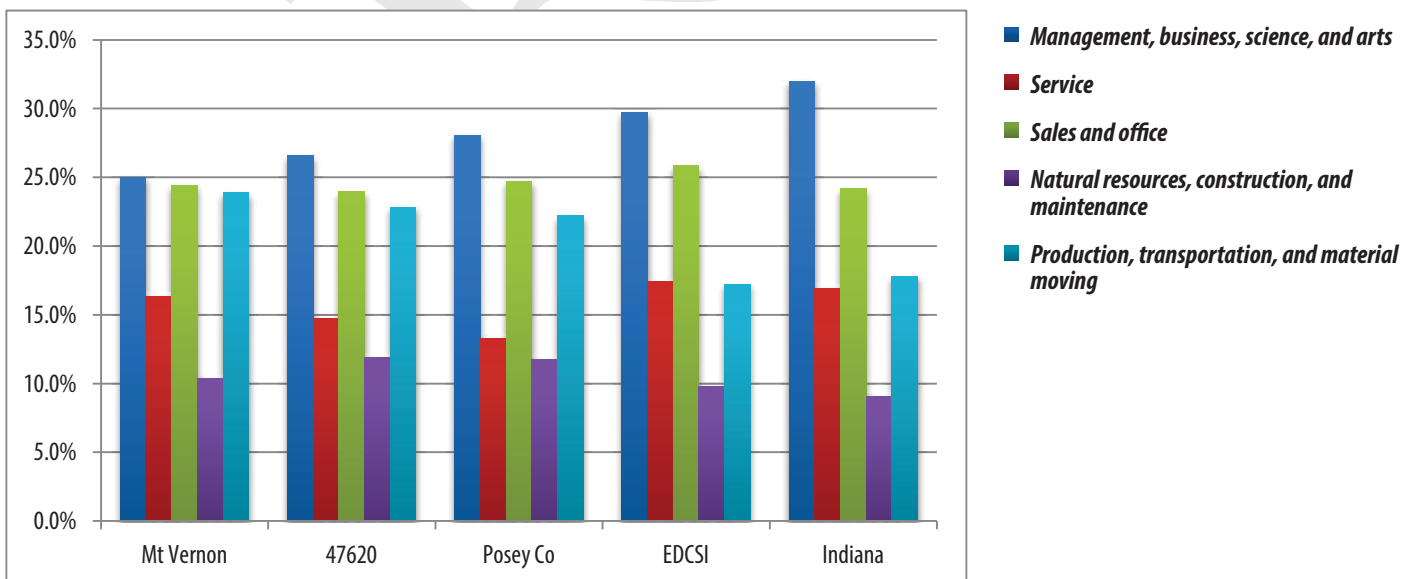




## Industries and Occupation



Manufacturing is an important industry in Mount Vernon, as well as the rest of the areas tabulated. It employs 20.5% of the total employed population and creates the largest earnings by place of work coming from manufacturing. Educational services, along with health care and social assistance is the next highest industry in the area, with 14.6% of the total employed population. This is followed by Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services, and Retail trade, followed by Transportation and warehousing. Of the total workforce in the area, management, business, science, and arts account for the top occupations, followed by sales and office, and production, transportation, and material moving.



---

## ***Previous Planning Efforts & Contributing Documents***

There is an ongoing desire from the community of Mount Vernon to transform the city into a more user friendly area, and can be seen within the past 10 years with various planning efforts the city has put forth. Many issues were starting to plague the city, causing a decrease in population, and prompting the city to start turning things around. Commencing with the desire to revitalize its downtown area, the city created a Downtown Redevelopment Plan. Soon to follow was the Bend in the Ohio: A New Riverfront Experience Plan. Both of those plans sought to address eye sores, the need for more recreation opportunities, development of the riverfront, water and sewer issues, and even roadway, traffic, and parking problems. As things started to progress, the city created an overall comprehensive plan to help guide future development within the city. More recently the city revised its zoning ordinance, clarifying different districts and each one's intended use. The city has applied for multiple grants for funding, with the Stellar communities program being the next step in acquiring necessary funding for many downtown revitalization projects.

### **The Bend in the Ohio: A New Riverfront Experience (2007)**



Over 50 small Indiana and Kentucky river towns share the Ohio River, and this plan was created to set Mount Vernon apart. The premise is to create something extraordinary that will set the city apart from others in the region. The five underlying concepts of the plan are to:

- Elevate expectations – keep it simple
- Historic Architectural fabric – preserve and infill
- Showcase unique assets – showcase area businesses
- Strengthen links and associations – regional assets
- Build a landmark – a case to keep the silos

There are several key components to activating the riverfront, and creating a new experience, each of which either enhances features already in place, or create complementary components to capitalize on existing features as best as possible. These include:

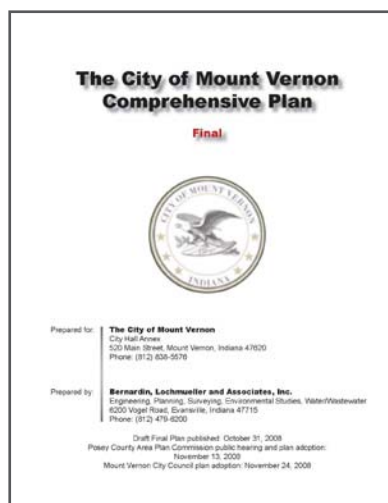
- Enhancing the landing wharf
- Creating formal lawns
- Creating a pavilion and meeting shelter
- Creating overlooks and bridges into the wooded area and out onto the river
- Creating artistic additions that take advantage of the influence and capabilities of the GE plastics plant located nearby, and other businesses throughout the community
- Developing a trail and marina
- Creating space to accommodate events and festivals

The existing urban fabric of the buildings fronting Water Street is not contiguous, creating opportunities to preserve the old architecture, and infill with new. The existing grain silos are described to create a unique situation for Mount Vernon, and these are foreseen to be a landmark and converted into a regional draw.

Funding opportunities are addressed in this plan including possibilities for funding from public sources, public/private partnerships, and private sources. The main theme is that it's easier to fund something unique, than to fund something ordinary. In order to be open to every stream of funding, the project approach needs to remain flexible to increase and remain attractive to all sources of funding.

This plan has since been implemented with the exception of the old silos, which were demolished and replaced with an amphitheater overlooking the Ohio River. This project was paid for by the City, and a matching grant from INDOT. A mixed use residential, commercial building has since been constructed on the north side of Water Street called The Landing, partially paid for from tax credits from the Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority.

## The City of Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan (2008)



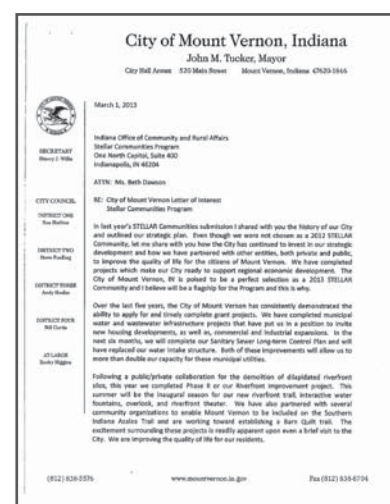
The purpose of this plan is to help guide future development within the city, including roads, sewers, water lines, drainage, parks, and other community facilities, and set guidelines for the protection of historic and natural resources. It addresses the use of land to accommodate future activities and the phasing of infrastructure to support development. This plan encompasses the incorporated area of Mount Vernon and the extraterritorial two-mile fringe area beyond the city's boundary. Demographics including population trends, forecasts, age & gender, educational attainment, household income, housing value, age of housing, labor force, employment, and commuting time were all part of the initial existing conditions background report. Projected demand for 25 acres of residential growth, 37 acres of commercial, and 34 acres for industrial growth could all be supported by an estimated 55 acres of vacant lots within the city. A number of goals have been listed in order to aid future development, and an implementation plan has been included.

- Enhance economic development opportunities
- Ensure residential development that is compatible and consistent
- Ensure industrial, commercial and office uses that are consistent with small city character
- Protect manmade and natural environment features
- Preserve and enhance existing transportation corridors
- Ensure adequate availability of a sanitary sewer system, water distribution, and stormwater facilities for existing development
- Recreation – preserve and enhance the parks and recreational facilities
- Community – ensure adequate availability of entertainment, recreation, services, and all necessities

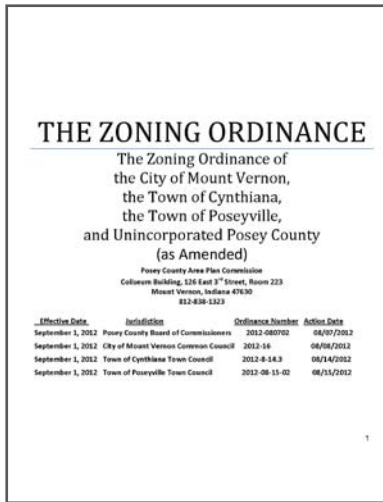
## Stellar Communities Program – Letter of Interest (2013)

This application was submitted in 2013 to pursue a grant through the Indiana Stellar Communities Program. Mount Vernon had applied in 2012, but was not chosen. Since the previous application in 2012, the City has continued to invest in its strategic development and partnered with both private and public entities. It describes that many projects in Mount Vernon are underway, including a sanitary sewer long-term control plan, and the completion of the Riverfront Improvement Project. It describes The Landing mixed use project, and how it will be completed end of 2013. It also describes enrollment in public schools has declined over the past five years, as did the population from the 2010 Census data counts. Mount Vernon is home to several major international corporations, as well as one of Indiana's 3 Ohio River ports, the Southwind Port. The City has teamed up with the companies looking to expand in order to cater to their needs. Projects in the works, and slated for some financial assistance from the Stellar Program include:

- The Riverfront Community Center
- Main Street Trail and Landscaping
- Main Street Park
- Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation



## Zoning Ordinance of Mount Vernon, IN (2012)



This code is enacted for the purposes of promoting health, safety, peace, morals, comfort, convenience, prosperity, order, and general welfare; lessening danger and congestion of public transportation and travel; securing safety from fire and other dangers; preventing overcrowding of land; avoiding undue concentration of population; providing adequate light and air, police protection, transportation, water, sewage, schools, parks, forest, recreational facilities, and other public requirements, and preventing undue encroachment thereon; conserving the value of building and encouraging the industrial, commercial, and residential growth of the community; and promoting the development of the community in accordance with the comprehensive plan. Several districts are described in the ordinance, and regulations are set forth in order to achieve the goals of the code.

- Residential District – residential properties to have minimum street frontage of 60ft
- Office District – may include accessory uses residential or commercial
- Commercial District – may include accessory uses residential or office
- Manufacturing District – may include accessory uses office or commercial
- Flood Hazard Area District – includes special provisions to protect future development from floods.
- Planned Unit Development Area – special zoning area that focuses on entire area, opposed to singular land uses.

## Mount Vernon Redevelopment Area Redevelopment Plan – Resolution No. 2013-02 (2013)

This resolution was set forth to establish the Mount Vernon Redevelopment Area. It is designed to assist in:

- Developing the riverfront
- Create a safer downtown
- Attract new housing and residential opportunities
- Return properties and buildings to functional reuse
- Install infrastructure like improved lighting
- Parking bicycle and pedestrian trails, and enhanced telecommunications
- Increase employment opportunities for citizens of the city

Dilapidated properties within this area have been identified and are slated to be acquired by the city's redevelopment commission. Despite various initiatives of the city, the ordinary operations of government have not provided sufficient investment opportunities as evidenced by the lack of normal development and occupancy in recent years. The poor conditions in the city's downtown can only be reversed through the use of tax increment financing to build the infrastructure and create incentives necessary to provide sufficient investment opportunities.

## Stellar Communities Program – Letter of Interest (2014)

This application was submitted recently to pursue a grant through the Indiana Stellar Communities Program. Mount Vernon had previously applied in 2012 and 2013, but was not chosen. Since both applications, the city has continued to invest in its strategic development. This year, Mount Vernon has been shortlisted to be a finalist with five other communities. There are several international corporations in the area, and expansion of those corporations are expected to reach roughly \$3 Billion. The city is aware that many things need to happen to attract the new workforce to become residents, and future users and investors of the city. An investment of \$45 million has been made by the city over the past six years and progress is happening. This letter of intent describes the community approach for the use of the Stellar Designation in its branding and marketing. It also describes previous planning and implementation of projects in the targeted area. Five major issues were determined:

1. Roadway/Traffic/Parking problems
2. The need for recreation and more things for teens and children
3. Cleaning up eye sores in town
4. Development of the riverfront
5. Water/Sewer and stormwater issues

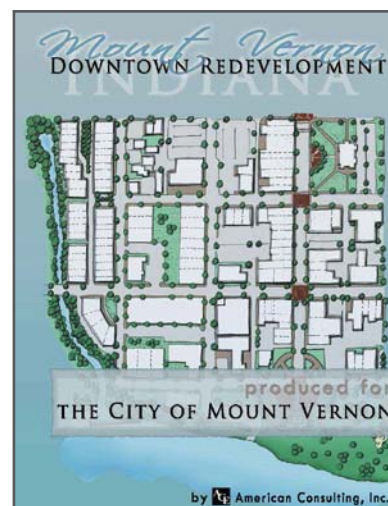
This application highlights 8 separate projects:

1. Phase IV and V Riverbend Trail
2. Residential Rehab
3. Riverfront Community Complex
4. River Bend Courtyard
5. McFadin's Bluff
6. ATI Building expansion
7. Redevelopment of vacant lots
8. Transportation Planning.

## City of Mount Vernon Downtown Redevelopment Plan 2005

The 2005 Redevelopment Plan has provided a starting point for this updated Redevelopment Plan. It starts with an extensive market analysis, covering demographics, market segmentation, retail market analysis, as well as a consumer preference survey. It addresses existing conditions, and uses those as a basis for gathering public input, and then taking that feedback to create a vision and a set of goals. A physical master plan is presented that depicts a physical view of the overall vision and goals, and is supported by a series of guideline images that are intended as examples to certain components that can be added to help the visual appeal of an area. A detailed action plan lists goals and action steps, including responsible parties and completion times. The goals include:

1. Provide the tools necessary to improve the climate for retail business activities
2. Provide the tools necessary to preserve the architectural character and history of Mount Vernon
3. Improve parking and travel in downtown Mount Vernon
4. Create a safe downtown
5. Create Downtown Mount Vernon as a destination through the showcasing of Mount Vernon's and Posey County's history and culture
6. Re-embrace the river as the centerpiece of downtown Mount Vernon
7. Bring housing opportunities (i.e. lofts, townhomes, and condominiums) to downtown Mount Vernon





---

### ***Downtown Profile Summary (Opportunity and Constraints)***

Downtown Mount Vernon has great potential to become a destination, attracting new residents and visitors. Vehicular traffic is heaviest along the state roads SR 62 and SR 69, forming a major intersection on the northwest side of the courthouse. This is a great focal point and already serves as the perceived arrival point for downtown. Before hitting that point, there are noticeable changes in context along the state roads, which signify a perceived arrival into the downtown. This route is heavily traveled by trucks going to and from the Port of Indiana. The intersection with Main and Walnut are the only two signaled intersections in the downtown area, and are also the only two places that provide for a safe crossing for pedestrians.

Great buildings that serve as destinations include the county courthouse, the Alexandrian Library and its imagination Station playground, and the Landing mixed use building. Key points of interest include multiple historical buildings, the Riverfront park with its amphitheater, boat launch, and great views, Koodie-Hoo's (which is one of the only places to eat in the downtown area).

All the local streets in this area are very wide and cater more to vehicular traffic than the pedestrian, which is a problem because the downtown area is surrounded on three sides by existing residential. On the west side of the area is a drainage ditch with mature trees that extends north from the Ohio River. This forms a natural boundary for the downtown area. Adjacent are warehouses, and auto oriented businesses. Mount Vernon Waterworks is located in the southwest corner of the focus area and occupies a block of riverfront property.

There are some older buildings along the Main Street corridor which are dilapidated and pose threats to safety of the public. Other buildings along Main Street and 2nd street form a set of core buildings that signify a downtown area. A number of banks are located throughout as well as multiple member-only clubs. Parking is scattered throughout, but is segmented into private only or public only lots which are not signed well, creating confusion.






This entire focus area falls within a quarter mile radius of the central Main Street and county courthouse area, which translates to a five minute walking radius. New projects in the works include a new Police and Fire Station, and a new park at the old location. A new community center is also planned for the newly vacated Vectren energy building across the street from the Waterworks site, and Sherburne Park.



### Map 1.6: Site Analysis



*Legend*

- |   |               |   |                       |   |                        |
|---|---------------|---|-----------------------|---|------------------------|
|  | State Roads   |  | Great Buildings       |  | Parking                |
|  | Local Streets |  | Natural Areas / Parks |  | Historical Destination |
|  | Focus Area    |  | Views                 |  | Member Clubs           |
|  | Traffic       |  | Dilapidated Buildings |  | Church                 |

---

DRAFT





# **MASTER PLAN FOUNDATION**



## **VISION & GOALS**

It is essential that downtown Mount Vernon's master plan be based on the community's core beliefs and goals.

Defining a community vision is an important part of the process of creating a master plan as part of the redevelopment plan. A vision describes an ideal picture. The community vision guides goal-setting, policies and actions by providing context for understanding community concerns, prioritizing issues, determining action steps and identifying indicators to measure progress.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

***Mount Vernon strives to empower passionate residents and strong leadership to create a vibrant center of energy and resources. A balanced mix of uses and activities, in combination with its rich history and prominence on the Ohio River, will cater to current and future residents, businesses, and visitors, and create an unsurpassed quality of life.***

The first step to achieving the vision is creating a series of goals. A series of goals transform the vision into a statement of direction. Each goal is then broken down further into measurable objectives to fulfill the goal. Within each objective area a series of organized activities/strategies/action steps that must be carried out to achieve the objective. This type of action planning provides direction and guidelines to implement the objective and goal of the community ultimately making the vision for downtown a reality.

The success of this vision is dependent on creating a variety of places to live, work, and play as well as providing the necessary resources to enable becoming a host for destinations and attractions throughout the year. In achieving this success, it is helpful to highlight the significant history and community character of the city and how it caters to families, young professionals, and senior citizens.

## **GOALS**

- Goal 1: Create an environment that attracts and retains businesses
- Goal 2: Preserve existing architectural character and history (encourage new construction to be complementary)
- Goal 3: Improve parking and travel in downtown
- Goal 4: Create a safe downtown environment
- Goal 5: Establish a destination through the showcasing of the city and county's history and culture
- Goal 6: Continue to embrace the river as the centerpiece of downtown
- Goal 7: Create an environment that supports housing activities (lofts, town homes and condominiums - new or renovated buildings)
- Goal 8: Establish clear communication of vision, message, and resources

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The opinions and values of the community play an integral role in developing the Downtown Mount Vernon revitalization plan. This section describes the results of the first workshop and summarizes the many questions, comments, and ideas gathered from the participants. It is designed to serve as a tool in developing the best possible plan for Mount Vernon.

Throughout the planning process, community members are offered a variety of opportunities to interact with the planning team to develop a plan for the area that reflects the community's most important values and priorities. Outreach activities include steering committee meetings, community workshops, public surveys, and press and media releases. This public workshop was held on April 23rd, 2014, in the Alexandrian Public Library.

The primary purpose of this portion of the outreach was to get the larger community's perspective on major issues, ideas, and concerns related to development and public space in the area, particularly as it concerns the future vitality of the downtown area. An informational overview was first given about what the Revitalization Plan is and how it might benefit the entire city.



## WORKSHOP RESULTS

Dot voting, along with post-it note comments and comment cards, was used as an interactive way to help participants visualize the area and start thinking about issues in the focus area and aspects of the downtown core that may be of interest to them.



## Downtown Profile

City of Mount Vernon, Indiana



### Existing Conditions



USE STICKY NOTES FOR COMMENTS / THOUGHTS / QUESTIONS



### Exhibit 1

The first exhibit was a compilation of existing conditions maps, including a general aerial image of the focus area and the limits of an existing TIF district; A circulation and gateways map to highlight the hierarchy of the road network, as well as identify the various intersections; A parking analysis map in order to see the availability of public parking lots, public street parking, and private lots; A current zoning map that shows the various zoning designations in the area; a land use map that show the existing actual uses of each parcel within the focus area; The ownership maps shows the various city or county owned parcels, along with owners of various key properties; Another map highlights the various attractions, and anchors of the focus area; the last map highlights current projects and initiatives - projects that are either already underway, or projects that are slated for funding in the near future.

Participants were asked to provide feedback whether the information presented was clearly representing the existing conditions. A single post-it comment mentions concern about event parking during amphitheater events, and the possibility of re-striping certain spots to provide for more parking.

## Vision

City of Mount Vernon, Indiana



### Which words mean the most to you?

[ Draft Vision Statement ]

"Mount Vernon strives to empower passionate residents and strong leadership to create a vibrant center of energy and resources. Its rich history and prominence on the Ohio River, along with a balanced mix of uses and activities, will cater to residents, businesses, and visitors, creating an unsurpassed quality of life."



#### Exhibit 2

This exhibit focused on the community vision. The new draft vision was presented, along with key words from the previous vision from the 2005 downtown redevelopment plan. Participants were asked to vote on which words are most meaningful to them, and which one is least meaningful.

Of the 44 words extracted and presented from the previous vision, 56 dots had been placed for most meaningful words, and 5 dots had been placed for least meaningful words.

The following graphic represents how participants voted, with the majority of votes going toward Future businesses, and future residents. Others of higher percentage of votes include Quality of Life, Family Friendly, Eateries, Entertainment Venues, and Local Events.

## Goals

City of Mount Vernon, Indiana



### What is most important to you?



1

Create an environment that attracts and retains businesses



2

Preserve existing architectural character and history of Mount Vernon (encourage new construction to be complementary)



3

Improve parking and travel in downtown



4

Create a safe downtown environment



5

Establish a destination through the showcasing of the city's and county's history and culture



6

Continue to embrace the river as the centerpiece of downtown



7

Create an environment that supports housing activities (lofts, town homes, and condominiums – new or renovated buildings)



8

Establish clear communication of vision, message, and resources

-  PLACE GREEN DOTS NEAR YOUR TOP PRIORITIES (3 DOTS)
-  PLACE ORANGE DOTS NEAR YOUR LOWEST PRIORITY (1 DOT)
-  USE STICKY NOTES FOR COMMENTS / THOUGHTS / QUESTIONS



### Exhibit 3

The third exhibit asked participants what is most important to them. This exhibit intended to gather input from participants which issues need the most attention. Of the 8 issues presented, 49 dots were placed next to issues as having the top priority to getting addressed. The following graphic represents how votes were placed, with creating an environment that attracts and retains businesses being the most important, and coming in close behind, to continue to embrace the river as the centerpiece of downtown.



## SWOT - Map

City of Mount Vernon, Indiana



### What is your SWOT analysis?

#### STRENGTHS

Characteristics of the community that give it an advantage over competing communities

#### WEAKNESSES

Characteristics that place the community at a disadvantage relative to others

#### THREATS

Elements getting in the way of success

#### OPPORTUNITIES

Chances to be more successful

- PLACE BLUE DOTS FOR STRENGTHS
- PLACE YELLOW DOTS FOR WEAKNESSES
- PLACE GREEN DOTS FOR OPPORTUNITIES
- PLACE RED DOTS FOR THREATS
- USE STICKY NOTES FOR COMMENTS / THOUGHTS / QUESTIONS



#### Exhibit 4

Before this public workshop, meetings with key stakeholders and other steering committee members were held to get initial feedback about what is happening in the community. Questions were asked to help determine what the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) were in the community. Information from those meetings helped develop a SWOT map, which was then presented to participants to help provide additional feedback. Participants were asked to place dots according to where those strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats were located, and provide additional information on post-its or comment cards.

Information from participants helped confirm what had been heard. Additionally, threats and weaknesses were identified in the Trees, Flood Zone area, threats were identified for the buildings on the Northeast corner of Main and 2nd streets. Another opportunity was identified on the south side of the library.



## SWOT - Words

City of Mount Vernon, Indiana



### Which words stand out most to you?

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Riverfront	Lack of pride / investment from residents	Riverfront (Ohio River)	Large retail development north of US - University PKWY
Diversity of employment opportunities	Rehab / flip houses has stopped or slowed down	New Home Owner Incentives	Newburg
Perry County Seat	Dilapidated buildings	Main Street Trail	Illinois residents / employees
Ohio River	Trouble with key landmark buildings	Walking improvements	Shopping / entertainment in Evansville
Infrastructure	PR problem	Bring residents downtown	
Schools / County tax rates	Message is not projected out	Increase parking	
Koodie-Hoo's / Existing restaurants	Controlling the message (Branding / Marketing)	Places to eat / sit	
New Businesses downtown	Lack of executive housing; Property issues	Activities catering to Evansville population	
Law enforcement	Diversity of products (housing types)	Economic growth	
Strong Partnerships	Trash / garbage pickup / spreading	Many vacant properties that have infrastructure in place	
Crime rates are down after liquor license not renewed	Unsafe housing	Community Oriented Policing	
Things to do / places to visit / where to stay	Crews	Reduce the "Broken window effect"	
	Non diverse retail (too many consignment shops)	Proactive vs Reactive	
	Weak RZA (too many variances)		
	No new housing		
	No bars / restaurants (other than Koodie-Hoo's)		
	No builder contracts / not reputable		

PLACE GREEN DOTS IF YOU AGREE (4 DOTS)  
 PLACE RED DOTS IF YOU DISAGREE (4 DOTS)  
 USE STICKY NOTES FOR COMMENTS / THOUGHTS / QUESTIONS



### Exhibit 5

Another method of garnering feedback about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats was presented with this exhibit, and used dot voting on words or phrases pertaining to the SWOT analysis. Participants were asked to place dots next to words or phrases of things already heard, and additionally proved feedback on comment cards or post-its. 86 dots had been placed next to words of which participants agree. 7 dots had been placed next to items of which were not agreed with.

The following graphic represents how participants voted, no additional items were written onto the exhibit. The majority of votes on strengths for the community went toward the riverfront; weaknesses went toward dilapidated buildings; opportunities went toward the riverfront and places to eat and sit; threats went to existing shopping and entertainment in Evansville.

## Master Plan Concept - Draft Illustrative Site Plan & Projects

City of Mount Vernon, Indiana



### Which projects are you most important to you?



- ● ● PLACE GREEN DOTS NEAR PROJECTS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU (3 DOTS)
- PLACE RED DOTS NEAR PROJECTS LEAST IMPORTANT TO YOU (1 DOT)
- USE STICKY NOTES FOR COMMENTS / THOUGHTS / QUESTIONS



### Exhibit 6

This next exhibit presented participants with an overview of the draft masterplan, and asked them to place dots on projects of which were most important to them, as well as on those which were least important. 11 projects were presented, and the majority of dots were located on the boardwalk / pier and path projects (9 votes). New retail garnered 3 dots. Mixed use infill garnered 2 dots, Streetscape improvements garnered 1 dot. Main Street Rehab received 2 dots for most important, but also received 1 dot for least important.

## Which action items are most important to you?



### Exhibit 7 & 8

These 2 exhibits presented the participants with the goals and action items from the previous downtown plan. Feedback was important for this exhibit in order to help determine which action items are still relevant, and which ones are important to the residents of the area.

## Which action items are most important to you?





## Planning Process

City of Mount Vernon, Indiana



### EXISTING CONDITIONS



### DOWNTOWN IDENTITY



### PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS & CONTRIBUTING DOCUMENTS



### MASTER PLAN CONCEPT LAND USE



### OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS



### MASTER PLAN CONCEPT ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN



### MASTER PLAN CONCEPT DIAGRAM



### Exhibit 9

This exhibit provided participants with a graphic representation of the planning process, demonstrating the actions and steps taken to get to the concept plan stage. The final steps include gathering public comments and incorporating those into the plan.



# **MASTER PLAN**

---

### ***Master Plan Concept***

This master plan concept uses a breakdown of the site analysis to create an initial idea of where development potential exists and what features need to be kept under consideration during each revitalization project. All projects should build off of one another, and complement the existing strengths of the focus area.

Areas are highlighted on the map to show existing buildings that act as catalysts, creating anchors for future revitalization projects. Among those key areas, there is potential for infill development intended to fill in the “missing teeth”, which would also include better parking for the area, and create opportunities for bringing in desired uses. Buffers need to be created to provide visual and sound barriers for undesired uses in a downtown area, which include the industrial areas on the west side. The wide local streets need to be redesigned to cater more toward the pedestrian, better linking the surrounding residential areas, and drawing more residents into the focus area. In order to create a better user experience, all intersections would serve the community well by being safer and more friendly to the pedestrian, especially those along 4th Street. There are currently few places to cross the State Road at a signalized crossing, creating somewhat of a barrier from the north side to the south side.

Areas along Water Street, just across from Riverbend Park, are prime for uses with higher destination and activity status, such as restaurants, bars, and other retail focus uses. A pathway is proposed along Main Street, and potential for another pathway link exists within the drainage ditch buffer area. A Boardwalk and pier would connect the area of river fronted by the waterworks site, and create a better landing point for riverboats.

The Master Plan Concept Diagram was influenced through discussions with key stakeholders in the area, and later tweaked and reinforced with the community outreach workshop in order to garner comments and ideas from the public users of the focus area.

### ***Master Plan Conceptual Land Use Diagram***

This conceptual land use diagram simplifies the Master Plan Site Plan into conceptual land uses. These uses were largely determined by the existing conditions in the focus area, but also proposed certain enhancements by adding complementary uses in close proximity to one another. The majority of this focus area is zoned Central Business District, or Commercial General, both of which encourage the compatible mixture of residential, office and commercial uses facilitating community livability by reducing the distances between uses to reduce dependence on the automobile. Mixed use areas are intended to create areas of multiple uses, enhancing the usability of those core downtown areas. Mixing residential, commercial, and office tends to enliven areas by creating a 24/7 active environment in close proximity to a downtown central business district provides more users for that downtown area on a regular basis.

Office, institutional, and service base uses are interspersed within the focus area, providing for an all inclusive downtown area. The intent of a successful downtown should be to provide options to live, work, shop, pray, enjoy, learn, and play, all within a 5 minute, or quarter mile walking radius.



### ***Master Plan Illustrative Site Plan***

This illustrative Site Plan communicates all of the proposed physical elements that are part of this Mount Vernon Downtown Redevelopment Plan Update. Key elements include:

- Apartments
- Luxury Townhomes
- New Single Family
- Owner Occupied Rehabilitation
- New Retail
- Mixed Use Infill
- New Boardwalk and Pier
- Streetscape Improvements
- New Office
- Main Street Rehabilitation & Trail
- Gateways

The components illustrated on the Illustrative Site plan include projects that have been listed in the most recent Stellar Communities application that are located within the downtown focus area. Two of the most prominent components that were heard from the community include attracting new businesses, and attracting new residents. Currently, many people who work in Mount Vernon, or Posey County reside outside of the county.

**New Apartments** - These apartments are intended to add to the residential options in Mount Vernon, increase the residential density in the downtown area, and create a transition from the single family residential homes located West of the focus area. Current uses on these sites include uses that are not aesthetically conducive to pedestrian activity. A riparian corridor traverses through these sites, which could easily serve as an amenity for the new apartments, as well as the city as a whole.

**Luxury Townhomes** - This is listed as number 2 on the map. These townhomes are intended to increase the residential options within the city, providing more choices for the higher salaries of the many companies in the surrounding area. The residential stock is somewhat limited, and many higher wage workers in the area choose to live in Evansville. These new townhomes are intended to capture new residents, who will ultimately become heavy users of the downtown area.

**New Single Family Residential** - Again, intended to increase the residential options in the downtown area, this project also seeks to fill in certain gaps located in existing residential areas where vacant lots are sitting ready for new development.

**Owner Occupied Rehabilitation** - As an item on the application for Stellar communities, this is seen as a way to help existing residents who cannot afford to maintain their properties. It not only addresses safety concerns by aiding in crucial repairs to the homes, but also helps eliminate the dilapidated stock of housing in the surrounding residential areas. Increasing the aesthetic appeal of an area helps boost community pride, retain existing residents, and create a desire for new residents to move in, not to mention increased safety in the area.

---

**New Retail** - One of the items heavily sought after by residents and city officials alike is attracting and retaining new businesses, with an element of this being additional retail in the downtown area. Infill areas are proposed as part of the master plan to become new retail. The existing density and urban fabric of the downtown area has many open properties currently used for surface parking, or are simply vacant properties. New retail can help fill in those voids, and create a better urban network of buildings and uses that attract additional users, adding to the vibrancy and activity seen in the area.

**Mixed Use Infill** - Intended to provide additional space for new offices or new retail opportunities, while including residential space above. Once again, this increases the residential stock in the area, providing even more choices for new residents. Additional residents and density in the area will help activate current businesses, and help attract additional options. With a higher density of residents in the area, some areas currently dedicated to surface parking may become structured parking.

**Pathway** - A riparian corridor traverses the west side of the focus area, and would serve well as an amenity to the surrounding residential uses. There is potential for creating a path that connects Brittlebank Park, the new apartments and townhomes, and the Ohio River. This new path would be connected to Sherburne Park over a boardwalk and Pier.

**Boardwalk and Pier** - To activate an area of riverfront currently in use by the Mount Vernon Waterworks site. This new boardwalk and Pier would create another amenity and attraction for users of the downtown area by creating a new and unique place to walk and capture views of the Ohio River. Riverboats would have a dedicated and easy place for mooring, and would serve as an excellent gateway for those tourist visiting Mount Vernon.

**Streetscape Improvements** - These are necessary improvements throughout the downtown focus area. The streets are currently too wide for their intended use, catering more toward vehicular traffic, and less to pedestrians and bicyclists. Most of the on-street parking areas are not designated well, and many people park over the curb onto pedestrian areas. Streetscape improvements include narrowing the vehicular lanes, providing adequate striping and signage for on-street parking, landscape bump-outs and buffer zones between the vehicular street and the pedestrian sidewalk.

**New Office Space** - To help attract additional businesses, and could even serve as incubator office space. These areas are depicted as being located across the street from the Alexandrian Library, and could serve as complementary office space for educational services. Other office space in the area could be located as part of the mixed use infill areas.

**Main Street Rehab and Trail** - Part of the projects on the application for Stellar Communities. It is intended to extend the existing trail in Riverbend Park up to 6th Street, to eventually connect to Brittlebank Park to the west. Main Street rehab would include similar components to the streetscape improvements, and would also include facade improvements, elevating the visual appeal of main street, as well as addressing some of the unsafe buildings.

**Gateways** - Calls out multiple gateways into the downtown area. These gateways are located along the three major entrances into the downtown. While existing changes in the in the physical character determine the entry into the downtown area, they are not clear or distinctive. Mount Vernon would serve better to attract and retain visitors and travelers by making a statement of their arrival with gateway features signifying they've arrived somewhere important. Elements include landscaping features, signage, and even a physical gateway to make travelers aware of their location, making the downtown area of Mount Vernon a true destination.



Map 1.6: Master Plan Concept Diagram

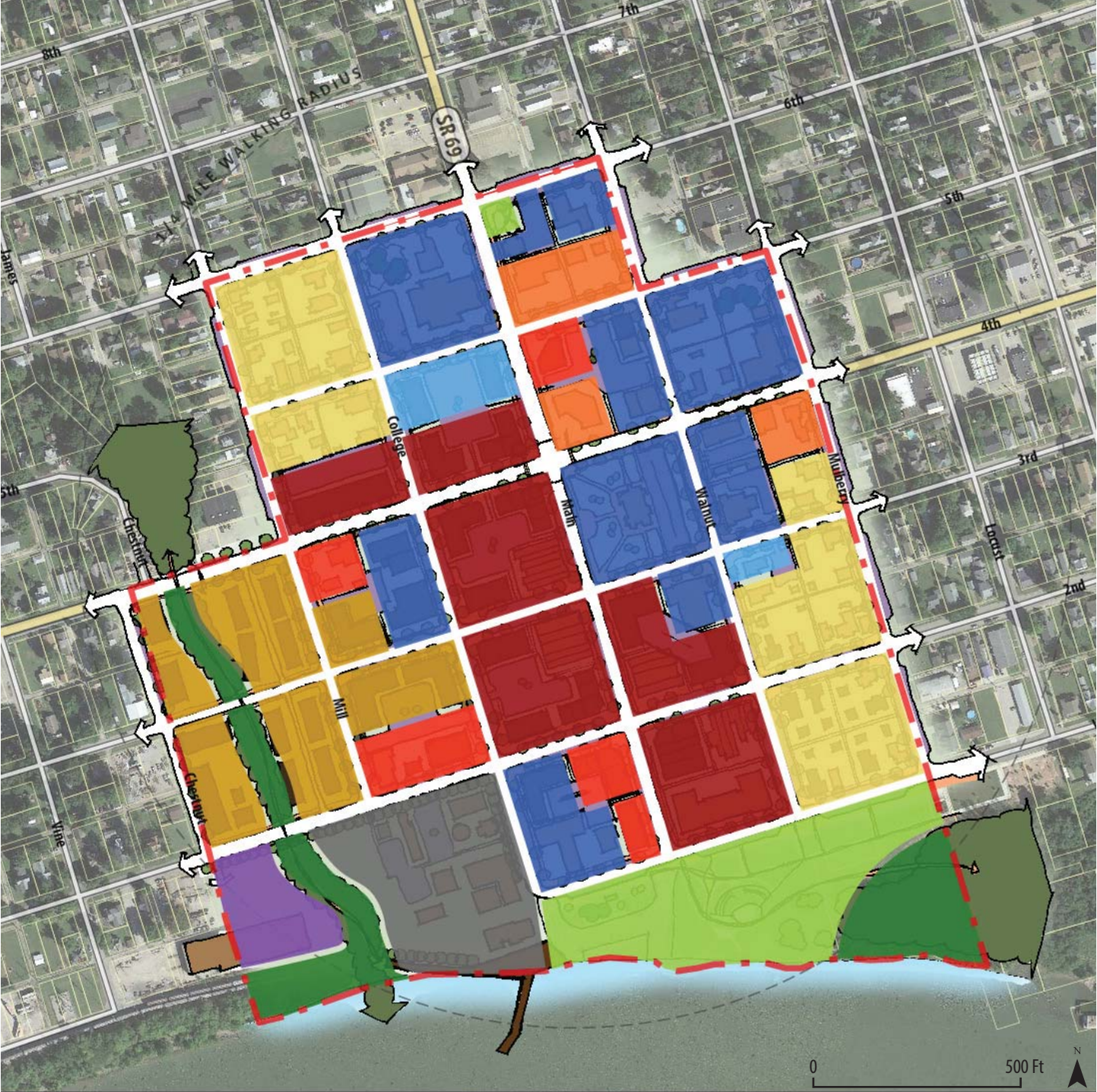


## Legend

- |               |                   |                    |                                    |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| State Roads   | Gateways          | Views / Ohio River | Incoming Pedestrians               |
| Local Streets | Incoming Visitors | Buffer             | Path / Trail                       |
| Focus Area    | Pedestrian Focus  | Existing Context   | Potential Infill Development Sites |
|               | Activity Focus    | Future Projects    |                                    |



Map 1.6: Master Plan Conceptual Land Use



Legend

- |                           |                          |                      |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Mixed Use                 | Multi-family Residential | Light Industrial     |
| Retail                    | Institutional            | Open Space - Park    |
| Service                   | Office                   | Open Space - Natural |
| Single Family Residential | Utilities                |                      |



Map 1.6: Master Plan Illustrative Site Plan



## Legend

- |                        |                    |                              |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 New Apartments       | 5 New Retail       | 9 Streetscape Improvements   | Parking            |
| 2 Luxury Townhomes     | 6 Mixed Use Infill | 10 New Office                | Existing Buildings |
| 3 New Single Family    | 7 Path             | 11 Main Street Rehab & Trail | New Buildings      |
| 4 Owner Occupied Rehab | 8 Boardwalk / Pier | 12 Gateways                  |                    |



---

DRAFT





# **ACTION PLAN**

---

## Strategy Matrix

The strategy matrix outlines the specific strategies that will direct Mount Vernon's implementation of its vision. The matrix is organized by goal, as stated in the Master Plan Foundation section (p.35); goals are listed again below.

- **Goal 1:** Create an environment that attracts and retains businesses
- **Goal 2:** Preserve existing architectural character and history (encourage new construction to be complementary)
- **Goal 3:** Improve parking and travel in downtown
- **Goal 4:** Create a safe downtown environment
- **Goal 5:** Establish a destination through the showcasing of the city and county's history and culture
- **Goal 6:** Continue to embrace the river as the centerpiece of downtown
- **Goal 7:** Create an environment that supports housing activities (lofts, town homes and condominiums - new or renovated buildings)
- **Goal 8:** Establish clear communication of vision, message, and resources

Under each goal are numerous strategies and additional action items (if applicable), which are listed as the following:

- Each strategy lists priority, time-frame, stakeholder partners, and outside resource.
- The priority is classified by primary or secondary. This priority is related to the urgency, not the ease or feasibility of the strategy.
- The time-frame is also listed as short-, medium-, or long-term. This designation identifies the potential ease and feasibility of completion.
- The stakeholder partners identifies the leader for this strategy and the main person to be held accountable.
- The "outside resources" indicate the additional resources or professionals needed to conduct and complete each strategy.

### **Critical Path Strategies**

The critical path strategies are the most essential strategies in achieving the vision and goals set forth by this Plan. All of the strategies are important, but the critical path strategies are actions that should be initiated and completed first. Some strategies are applicable city-wide while others are applicable to a particular department, area, or component of Mount Vernon. If such department or organization does not exist, or the respective responsible parties need guidance through each policy, new organizations should be developed, or new positions should be created.

1. In order to address the objectives identified in the Action Plan and gain momentum through incremental implementation, it will be absolutely critical that an individual or champion is engaged to carry forward this plan. This is not a part-time or weekend job, this is a full time effort to transform downtown Mount Vernon. Because of this fact, the first step toward success is to create a position within the community whose primary responsibility is as caretaker and implementer of this plan. There are a number of potential methods to accomplish this task. A position could be created within the city, hired and managed by the Mayor's office, such as a city manager or downtown director. With the establishment of a TIF district in downtown, the Redevelopment Commission could hire a redevelopment director. Finally, a newly formed Main Street Organization should hire a Main Street Director with responsibilities that potentially could include downtown master plan champion.
2. Once a full time individual is assigned as manager of the downtown plan, their first responsibility should be to identify and re-engage the influential partners or stakeholders who have the time and resources to assist with implementation of various stages within the action plan. Even with a full time individual responsible for the action plan, they will need support to realize the future potential in downtown. Each objective within the matrix has included suggestions for these partnerships, but others may also be recognized as the plan gains momentum and others volunteer to participate.
3. While all of the objectives within the action plan are important, they need a focus. This focus can be provided through a process to establish a brand and image for downtown Mount Vernon. This brand is an easy method to help residents and potential investors understand what the community is all about and what the community hopes to accomplish through the highlighted improvements in the plan. This brand would also be the focus of any marketing campaign or initiative that grows from these efforts.



## 1 - Create an environment that attracts and retains businesses

OBJECTIVE	PRIORITY PRIMARY- SECONDARY	TIME FRAME (SHORT- MEDIUM- LONG-TERM)	KEY STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS	OUTSIDE RESOURCE
<b>A. Form Main Street Organization</b>	Primary	Short	Redevelopment Commission, Mayor, Main Street Board of Directors	Indiana Main Street Organization, City Attorney
<p><i>Strategy: A prosperous, sustainable community is only as healthy as its core, and the National Main Street Center provides assistance in revitalizing the main street area. This extra effort will help spur further development and reinvestment in other parts of the downtown revitalization area. The Main Street program will provide a proven strategy for revitalization, a powerful network of linked communities, and national support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Apply for Main Street designation</li> <li>» Determine Board of Directors from Steering Committee list</li> <li>» Expand from OCRA workshop</li> <li>» Develop fundraising strategies and work plan</li> <li>» Promote Main Street program</li> </ul>				
<b>B. Create and promote a small business toolkit</b>	Secondary	Short	Main Street Organization, Posey County Economic Development Partnership, Downtown Business Owners	
<p><i>Strategy: Create a small business toolkit that is a one-stop-shop for questions and guidance regarding permitting, financial resources, and network opportunities to help business owners access and utilize the available resources.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Include resources for permitting processes, funding processes, network opportunities, and incentives available</li> <li>» Distribute information through locations for printed material as well as digitally through economic development websites</li> </ul>				
<b>C. Create a tax abatement program for small business activities</b>	Secondary	Short	City Attorney, Common Council, Posey County Economic Development Partnership	Indiana Code, Indiana Association of Cities and Towns
<p><i>Strategy: Form relationships with employers to create and maintain jobs, allow the community to compete with other communities for new employees, encourage new investment into deteriorated areas, create a larger tax base, create additional revenue, and build a stronger local economy. Tools include those that increase or maintain the basic employment base, encourage redevelopment of deteriorated areas, and stimulate investment in specific areas with the help of tax abatement tools.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Establish a definition of qualifying businesses</li> <li>» Provide small business incentives</li> <li>» Create a schedule for abatement process</li> <li>» Pass tax abatement ordinance that apply to small businesses</li> <li>» Follow schedule for tax abatement process that includes periodic public meetings</li> <li>» Utilize full benefit of the Southwest Indiana Economic Development Coalition and the Posey Count Economic Development Partnership</li> </ul>				
<b>D. Pursue applying for business development loans that will provide funding for needed business development opportunities</b>	Primary	Short	Redevelopment Commission, Mayor, Main Street Organization	Local business owners
<p><i>Strategy: Enhance the community to make it more attractive to businesses. Funds can be obtained by various public and private entities, and are typically funded through economic development opportunities through state agencies.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Determine what business opportunities need funding</li> <li>» Research communities that have effectively utilized business development loans as an economic development tool</li> <li>» Determine appropriate grants to pursue application process</li> <li>» Determine qualifications for local businesses to posses to receive grants issued from the business development loan</li> <li>» Create business development grant cycle</li> </ul>				

## 1 - Create an environment that attracts and retains businesses

OBJECTIVE	PRIORITY PRIMARY- SECONDARY	TIME FRAME (SHORT- MEDIUM- LONG-TERM)	KEY STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS	OUTSIDE RESOURCE
<b>E. Promote, attract, and retain specialty shops in the downtown area</b>	Primary	Medium	Business leaders, business owners, Common Council, Main Street Organization, Posey County Economic Development Partnership	Media advertisements for Internet, radio, newspapers
<p><i>Strategy: Develop marketing materials to attract desired businesses and encourage relocations into the downtown area. Recruitment and marketing materials include market analysis data, letters of introduction about the downtown, highlights of the community, traffic/pedestrian volume, major employers/businesses in the area, available commercial space, etc.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Generate leads for potential desired businesses</li> <li>» Follow model used for creating tax credits for The Landing</li> <li>» Create incentives for encouragement and to reduce cost of relocation</li> <li>» Establish business recruitment team</li> <li>» Research market analysis, business mix, desired business environments, available facilities, business assistance funds</li> <li>» Advertise and promote downtown Mount Vernon for businesses</li> </ul>				
<b>F. Maintain and Implement Tax Increment Financing</b>	Primary	Short	Common Council, Redevelopment Commission	
<p><i>Strategy: The established TIF district needs to be maintained, and actions need to continue in order to maintain the most effective outcome. For a TIF district to be effective, any new, renovated, or improved properties increase the revenue of the district raising it above the baseline. Additional revenue is put into public improvements, such as sewer lines, water lines, and road construction or improvements.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Establish baseline assessed value</li> <li>» Define what public improvements will be made with TIF funds</li> </ul>				
<b>G. Attract retail downtown (restaurants, cafes, bars, microbreweries, convenience retail, etc.)</b>	Primary	Medium	Redevelopment Commission, Downtown Retail Committee, Lending Institutions, Main Street Organization, Posey County Chamber of Commerce, Posey County Economic Development Partnership	
<p><i>Strategy: Eliminate the food desert and create reasons for people to come and stay. This mix of food related uses will help create a good balance for attracting people throughout the day and evening. Areas need to be designated for these uses that work congruently with existing or proposed uses, effectively creating a true destination, and not just a place to eat or drink. Microbreweries tend to act as destination restaurants or bars, and can add a unique flair to a downtown area. Convenience retail is especially important for seniors, but also creates a one-stop-shop feel for a downtown area, and provide a level of convenience to residents and visitors.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Organize a downtown retail committee</li> <li>» Determine the market</li> <li>» Create list of potential restaurants, cafes, bars, microbreweries, and convenience retail</li> <li>» Create list of available downtown properties with preferred locations for each use</li> <li>» Provide hassle-free guidelines and aid to acquiring and complying with necessary permitting and licensing</li> <li>» Recruit potential bar and cafe owners</li> <li>» Provide incentives for relocation or startups</li> </ul>				
<b>H. Attract a Bed and Breakfast downtown</b>	Secondary	Medium	Redevelopment Committee, Posey County Chamber	
<p><i>Strategy: Increase the options of places to stay overnight. Bed &amp; Breakfasts can act as a great source of promotion for the downtown by providing guests with local information on where to shop and what to see. In order to attract a B&amp;B however, there must be a need for lodging in the area.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Create a list of potential Bed &amp; Breakfast locations</li> <li>» Find and recruit interested parties</li> <li>» Create incentive package as an attracting factor</li> <li>» Conduct market analysis and feasibility study</li> </ul>				

## 2 - Preserve existing architectural character and history (encourage complementary infill)

OBJECTIVE	PRIORITY PRIMARY- SECONDARY	TIME FRAME (SHORT- MEDIUM- LONG-TERM)	KEY STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS	OUTSIDE RESOURCE
<b>A. Implement a Facade Grant Program</b>	Primary	Short	Redevelopment Commission, Main Street Organization, Downtown Business Owners	Greater Merchants Association
<p><i>Strategy: Help improve the character of downtown by offering funding opportunities to business owners to encourage building facade restorations or improvements. This has the potential to increase business revenue, increase property value and renew civic pride in the community.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Apply for a business development loan, Community Development Grant, Statewide Revolving Loan or Indiana Preservation Grants</li> <li>» Provide access to grants or no/low interest financing</li> <li>» Create program guidelines and determine payment distribution</li> <li>» Advertise and promote program to local business and property owners</li> <li>» Follow guidelines to review applications and award qualifying applicants</li> </ul>				
<b>B. Designate the downtown as a legal historic district for zoning purposes</b>	Secondary	Medium	Redevelopment Commission, Main Street Organization	
<p><i>Strategy: Historic designation is a multi-faceted approach, and can benefit an area by helping preserve the original character of that area while creating a destination for outsiders, and an asset to build upon. The existing Welbourne Historic District needs help in becoming more effective.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Establish a historic preservation commission</li> <li>» Identify historic sites to submit to the National Register of Historic Places</li> <li>» Legislative body approves historic district through ordinance</li> </ul>				
<b>C. Create a set of design standards</b>	Secondary	Medium	Historic Preservation Commission, Main Street Organization, Posey County Area Plan Commission	
<p><i>Strategy: Guide future residential, commercial, and industrial development to work well with the public realm and existing context. Having a set of expanded guidelines will help Mount Vernon become a unified city, and provide an easy how-to guide for future development and improvements.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Create design standard board</li> <li>» Draft design standard code</li> <li>» Submit code for approval into zoning</li> <li>» Create design standard review schedule</li> <li>» Review building proposals</li> </ul>				
<b>D. Encourage complementary infill development</b>	Primary	Medium	Redevelopment Commission, Main Street Organization, Posey County Economic Development Partnership	
<p><i>Strategy: Reduce the number of holes and missing "teeth" in the urban network. The downtown sense of place and existing architectural character begins to get lost when holes appear in the network. These parcels are fully serviced by road, water, sewer, and electricity, and are prime locations for new infill development.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Determine list of appropriate uses for vacant lots</li> <li>» Utilize design standards developed to maintain architectural character and history</li> <li>» Create incentives for new development</li> </ul>				



### 3 - Improve parking and travel in the downtown area

OBJECTIVE	PRIORITY PRIMARY- SECONDARY	TIME FRAME (SHORT- MEDIUM- LONG-TERM)	KEY STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS	OUTSIDE RESOURCE
<b>A. Improve existing parking lots</b>	Primary	Short	Redevelopment Commission	
<p><i>Strategy: Increase the amount of available parking areas by better utilizing the existing parking network (i.e. shared parking, better signage). Parking for boat trailers has become an issue and can be better addressed with new signage and better parking enforcement. Some private lots that aren't utilized during the weekends, or better usage of the boat club parking could provide some relief.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Apply for community improvement grants or allocate in city budget</li> <li>» Increase lighting in parking lots for safety concerns</li> <li>» Post parking lots with directional/regulating signage</li> <li>» Add better parking signage to designate between private lots and public parking areas</li> <li>» Maintain parking surfaces</li> </ul>				
<b>B. Improve on-street parking and reduce street widths</b>	Primary	Medium	Redevelopment Commission	
<p><i>Strategy: Reduce the widths of travel lanes, effectively allowing more designated space for parking, and wider sidewalks to increase pedestrian traffic. Narrower lanes will help increase safety in the downtown area by reducing vehicular speeds. Better markings and signage for street parking is essential to providing the appearance of ample parking.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Reduce widths of tertiary streets (curb to curb width)</li> <li>» Establish parking regulations and provide clear signage and markings</li> <li>» Improve pedestrian crossings to follow example of Water Street and Main Street</li> </ul>				
<b>C. Improve wayfinding and downtown branding program</b>	Primary	Short	Main Street Organization, Redevelopment Commission, Posey County Chamber, Posey County Economic Development Partnership	
<p><i>Strategy: Create a better image for Mount Vernon by developing and establishing a brand for the city. Creating a brand is a marketing strategy in which a place establishes its own characteristics which aids in distinguishing itself in a person's mind. Signage will help define the brand, and create a more user friendly area.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Establish Mount Vernon Improvement committee</li> <li>» Establish downtown brand and image</li> <li>» Create branding and promotional plan</li> <li>» Hold fund raisers</li> </ul>				
<b>D. Determine current parking inventory and potential need</b>	Primary	Short	Redevelopment Commission, Main Street Organization	
<p><i>Strategy: To better understand the physical needs of parking in the downtown area, a parking and accessibility analysis is required to determine the existing quantity of parking, and the existing usage of parking.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Conduct parking and accessibility analysis</li> <li>» Determine better areas for downtown parking</li> <li>» Determine better areas for Boat Trailer parking</li> </ul>				

## 4 - Create a safe downtown environment

OBJECTIVE	PRIORITY PRIMARY- SECONDARY	TIME FRAME (SHORT- MEDIUM- LONG-TERM)	KEY STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS	OUTSIDE RESOURCE
<b>A. Extend Landing lighting style into streetscapes Downtown</b>	Secondary	Short	Redevelopment Commission, Main Street Organization, Downtown Business Owners	
<p><i>Strategy: Enhance the public environment to make visitors and residents feel more comfortable walking around the downtown area, especially after dark. Lighting can serve two purposes; the first is to provide more light and enhance the visibility in dark areas; the second is to provide visual appeal to the streetscape with creative lighting.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Create Downtown Safety Committee</li> <li>» Apply for Community Improvement grants (Community Foundation Alliance)</li> <li>» Incorporate additional lighting opportunities in City Budget</li> <li>» Follow set of design guidelines for differences in street lighting, parking lighting, park lighting, and creative lighting</li> </ul>				
<b>B. Install video surveillance cameras and call buttons</b>	Secondary	Long	Redevelopment Commission, Main Street Organization	
<p><i>Strategy: An additional step to ensure that visitors feel safe is the presence of safety cameras and call buttons. A larger presence can deter crime and helps portray a community that welcomes and protects business, creating future incentives for business owners to relocate into downtown Mount Vernon. It also creates a peace-of-mind attitude for current and future residents.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Pass ordinance for electronic policing</li> <li>» Apply for community improvement grants</li> <li>» Incorporate maintenance of items in police budget</li> </ul>				
<b>C. Address unsafe buildings</b>	Primary	Medium	Redevelopment Commission, Main Street Organization	
<p><i>Strategy: Rehabilitating or demolishing structures deemed dilapidated and unsafe is crucial to maintaining a safe environment. Dilapidated buildings pose multiple threats to a community. The first is whether it is structurally sound or if pieces are falling off, posing safety hazards for pedestrians. The second is on a crime level: dilapidated buildings tend to attract criminal activity as they provide empty, dark, and hidden places for criminal activity.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Prioritize list of unsafe, dilapidated buildings</li> <li>» Funding to be acquired for owner rehabilitation if salvageable</li> <li>» Process of condemnation if not salvageable</li> <li>» Funding to be acquired for demolition and site prep for future development</li> </ul>				
<b>D. Ensure areas are set aside for additional residential or mixed use development</b>	Primary	Medium	Redevelopment Commission, Posey County Area Plan Commission, Main Street Organization, Posey County Chamber of Commerce	
<p><i>Strategy: More eyes on the street will be the best deterrent against crime, and help create a safer downtown. Better housing, more retail, and businesses with windows on the street will help this strategy, as will bringing in more events into the key areas of the downtown core.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Create more activity in the downtown area with new uses, more events, and later hours of operation</li> <li>» Set a timeline for each goal</li> <li>» Create one-stop-shop for information on what events are possible and how to hold them</li> <li>» Set up events committee</li> <li>» Determine locations for residential and mixed use development, and stick to it</li> <li>» Determine locations for each event, anchoring larger activities throughout the downtown area</li> </ul>				

#### 4 - Create a safe downtown environment

OBJECTIVE	PRIORITY PRIMARY- SECONDARY	TIME FRAME (SHORT- MEDIUM- LONG-TERM)	KEY STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS	OUTSIDE RESOURCE
<b>E. Increase patrol on foot, bike, and car</b>	Secondary	Short	Redevelopment Commission, Mayor	

*Strategy: Provide additional police presence. Additional police throughout the community can help create the feel of a safe and protected community for residents, tourists, and business owners. Police patrol on foot and bike is best for this, and adds activity onto the streets other than vehicular traffic.*

- » Assess current man power needs
- » Assess current and future equipment needs
- » Hire additional police (if needed)
- » Develop new tactic and patrol routes
- » Utilize new central position of Police Station as a deterrent
- » Reduce speeding with effective traffic calming methods (i.e. stop signs in crosswalks, flashing lights, speed humps)



## 5 - Establish Mount Vernon as a historical and cultural destination

OBJECTIVE	PRIORITY PRIMARY- SECONDARY	TIME FRAME (SHORT- MEDIUM- LONG-TERM)	KEY STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS	OUTSIDE RESOURCE
<b>A. Increase awareness of the culture and history</b>	Secondary	Medium	Main Street Organization, Historic Preservation Commission	
<p><i>Strategy: Historic tourism or cultural heritage tourism is a method which communities have utilized to highlight their historic, unique, and authentic cultural amenities within their town or region to encourage tourism. This type of tourism allows communities to save their heritage, encourage community pride, and gain economic benefits.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Utilize current listings on the National Register of Historic Places</li> <li>» Accommodate a historical museum that displays the city's and county's history</li> <li>» Inventory historical artifacts and locations which would be needed to necessitate a historical museum</li> <li>» Determine the availability and affordability of a location for the museum</li> <li>» Obtain necessary funding through grants or loans in order to secure a location, for any repairs or upgrades, and for ongoing maintenance</li> <li>» Produce promotional materials for the historical museum, and utilize location as a visitor's center</li> </ul>				
<b>B. Establish a public art or mural program to display the history and culture</b>	Secondary	Short	Main Street Organization, Posey County Chamber of Commerce	
<p><i>Strategy: Increase awareness and accessibility to the arts, and create an identity for the community, which area valuable assets to business owners and residents. This program could also draw from local talent through partnerships with school programs and contests with prizes supported by and for the local community.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Create an Arts Council</li> <li>» Apply for Arts Council of Southwestern Indiana Grant</li> <li>» Set guidelines for financing, incorporating, and maintaining public art</li> <li>» Submittal of designs for public art piece or mural</li> <li>» Hold events that support public art</li> </ul>				
<b>C. Construct Main Street Trail</b>	Secondary	Long	Redevelopment Commission, Mount Vernon-Black Township Parks & Recreation	
<p><i>Strategy: A multi-use trail through the community is a great asset for the residents, and can be embellished for visitors by adding wayfinding signage and historical information stations.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Design and construct with INDOT funding awarded in 2014</li> <li>» Establish an organization in support of trail</li> <li>» Identify goals of the trail</li> <li>» Continue pursuit of financing and construction of trail</li> <li>» Establish network of historical wayfinding markers</li> <li>» Incorporate American Discovery Trail, Azalea Trail, parks</li> <li>» Expand and connect after first phase is constructed</li> </ul>				
<b>D. Create designated gateways into downtown area</b>	Secondary	Long	Redevelopment Commission, Mount Vernon Street Department	
<p><i>Strategy: Establish a clear entrance into the downtown area of Mount Vernon. There is a noticeable change in context along SR 62, and along SR 69 entering the downtown area, and as part of establishing a true destination, it is crucial to define that area.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Design appropriate gateway treatments for downtown for locations identified on master plan</li> <li>» Acquire funding for improvements surrounding these areas and creating of gateways</li> </ul>				

## 6 - Continue to embrace the river as the centerpiece of downtown

OBJECTIVE	PRIORITY PRIMARY- SECONDARY	TIME FRAME (SHORT- MEDIUM- LONG-TERM)	KEY STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS	OUTSIDE RESOURCE
<b>A. Establish an official riverfront district per Indiana Code</b>	Secondary	Medium	Redevelopment Commission, Main Street Organization	
<p><i>Strategy: Create an activation zone related to riverfront activities, enabling additional liquor licenses and permits without regard to the restrictions set forth by Indiana Code. Creation of a Riverfront District will ease the ability for new bars, restaurants, and microbreweries to locate in the downtown area.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Define the area in accordance with the Indiana Code to be delineated as a riverfront district</li> <li>» Adopt ordinance establishing riverfront district</li> <li>» Further investigation to define programs and events that would receive support from residents and businesses</li> </ul>				
<b>B. Establish a downtown promotions and branding program</b>	Primary	Short	Main Street Organization, Posey County Chamber	
<p><i>Strategy: Establish a specific image to portray to outsiders as a promotional tool for gathering interest about Mount Vernon. Branding is a marketing strategy in which a place establishes its own character which aids in distinguishing itself in a person's mind. Different items are identified such as a logo, public art, street lighting, signage, and a website portal, that can all add to the perception of an area.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Establish Downtown Mount Vernon Organization</li> <li>» Establish targeted market area</li> <li>» Establish downtown Vision Statement</li> <li>» Establish downtown brand &amp; Image</li> <li>» Establish promotions program for advertising the city and what it has to offer</li> </ul>				
<b>C. Establish downtown events programs</b>	Primary	Short	Main Street Organization, Posey County Chamber, Mount Vernon-Black Township Parks & Recreation	Smoke on the Ohio, River Days
<p><i>Strategy: To create or attract different events into the downtown area in order to increase activity and retention levels among the attending population</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Establish Downtown events committee to coordinate, plan, and host events</li> <li>» Coordinate with area clubs and businesses for sponsorship and volunteers for events</li> <li>» Establish targeted market area</li> <li>» Utilize Promotions and Branding Plan to aid in identifying events to hold</li> <li>» Develop a downtown events calendar to help with coordination of events</li> <li>» Advertise local events</li> <li>» Incorporate desired events</li> <li>» Establish car show events, cook off contests, art fairs and other activities to draw in more people</li> </ul>				
<b>D. Continue annual stop of steam boats, embellish areas to visit</b>	Secondary	Short	Redevelopment Commission, Main Street Organization, Posey County Chamber of Commerce	Delta Queen, Santa Maria
<p><i>Strategy: Promote riverboat tourism with added attractions, better docking space, and an increase of activities within walking distance of the riverfront</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Promotions and branding plan along with downtown events calendar</li> <li>» Receive financial support for obtaining Steam Boat Stop similar to events in years past</li> <li>» Coordinate with Steam Boat Company to verify location and date</li> <li>» Construction of better boat launch area, and dock space/pier for larger riverboats</li> <li>» Utilize local businesses to place promotional materials and advertising for event</li> </ul>				

## 7 - Create an environment that supports increased housing options (lofts, town homes, and condos)

OBJECTIVE	PRIORITY PRIMARY- SECONDARY	TIME FRAME (SHORT- MEDIUM- LONG-TERM)	KEY STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS	OUTSIDE RESOURCE
<b>A. Establish a housing market plan geared toward developers</b>	Primary	Short	Redevelopment Commission	
<p><i>Strategy: Downtowns provide an ideal environment for mixed income, walkable, vibrant neighborhoods that attract residents looking for a sense of place that can be difficult to find in a suburban setting. Moreover, rapidly changing household demographics have made downtown living attractive to the growing population of students, single professionals, and empty-nesters. Having a plan that specifically address downtown housing is fundamental in illustrating the community's wants and desire for housing within the area.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Set up meetings between the mayor, Common Council and the downtown landowners to discuss plans for housing development</li> <li>» Develop a marketing plan locating what areas are the best for housing development</li> <li>» See if property owners whose land is best suited for housing development are willing to sell or develop their land as housing</li> <li>» Set up meetings with developers within a 50 mile radius of Mount Vernon to propose Mount Vernon's marketing plan for housing development</li> <li>» Following personal meetings with developers and landowners, send developers a request for proposal to receive input for housing development ideas</li> </ul>				
<b>B. Identify and acquire property for multi-family</b>	Primary	Short	Redevelopment Commission	
<p><i>Strategy: In order to accommodate downtown housing in the desired areas of Mount Vernon, it is imperative that the local government acquires property (in areas where downtown housing opportunities are desired) in order to reserve those properties to be sold to developers.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Revise current zoning ordinance to have residential as an allowable or special exception use in areas which are compatible to housing development</li> <li>» Encourage private developers to purchase available property for the development of housing</li> <li>» If public acquisition of land is needed, establish a housing consortium in conjunction with Posey County as authorized by the Title II of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act, only if an affordable housing Development is desired.</li> <li>» Through the HOME program established by the US department of Housing and urban Development grant funding can be obtained by Mount Vernon and Posey County for the acquisition of land for the development of affordable housing.</li> <li>» Upon Location of land suitable for housing development within the HOME program guidelines begin to acquire hand develop land for housing</li> </ul>				
<b>A. Draw surrounding residents in</b>	Secondary	Medium	Redevelopment Commission, Mount Vernon Street Department	
<p><i>Strategy: Create a better experience for current residents of Mount Vernon by revitalizing the streets leading to the surrounding residential areas with better sidewalks, narrower vehicular lanes, shared bike lanes, better buffering against undesirable uses, and better crossings across SR 62. This strategy will bring in a larger group of people into the downtown core, effectively increasing the market for new businesses, restaurants, and shops within the downtown area.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Identify key streets leading from downtown to residential areas</li> <li>» Utilize established design standards</li> <li>» Create buffers and better pedestrian experience</li> </ul>				



## 8 - Establish clear communication of vision, message, and resources

OBJECTIVE	PRIORITY PRIMARY- SECONDARY	TIME FRAME (SHORT- MEDIUM- LONG-TERM)	KEY STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS	OUTSIDE RESOURCE
<b>A. Create a single point of contact for economic development efforts.</b>	Primary	Short	Redevelopment Commission	
<p><i>Strategy: A single point of contact for economic development efforts offers an efficient, proactive and accessible partner for community and economic development.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Coordinate efforts with Posey County Economic Development Partnership as primary economic development partner and regional liaison</li> </ul>				
<b>B. Develop a consolidated outreach and marketing program consistent with brand.</b>	Primary	Long	Main Street Organization, Posey County Chamber, Posey County Economic Development Partnership	
<p><i>Strategy: A consistent outreach and marketing strategy is important to create a consistent message. Every mailer, announcement, status update, sign, and communication must reinforce the brand established for Mount Vernon, making it easy for the audience to understand the message. By using a wide array of media, a larger amount of people can be reached.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Consolidate efforts of related agencies</li> <li>» Coordinate all marketing efforts and communication and outreach under a single message</li> <li>» Clearly identify primary point of contact in all materials (printed or digital)</li> <li>» Designate targeted audiences</li> <li>» Leverage existing assets within message</li> <li>» Develop print materials for distribution (i.e. fact book, property cut sheets)</li> <li>» Continue to utilize broader collateral news coverage for free media               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Publish good news on a regular basis, use both editorial opportunities and press releases with local media</li> <li>– Keep media apprised of all implementation activity of the planning effort</li> </ul> </li> <li>» Utilize social media in messaging (Facebook, Twitter, mobile apps, etc.)</li> </ul>				
<b>C. Enhance the use of digital/on-line communications, newsletter, etc, for dispersing important information.</b>	Primary	Short	Posey County Economic Development Partnership, Posey County Chamber, Local Media	
<p><i>Strategy: Digital communications are likely the most common form of communication for Mount Vernon community members. This also allows someone to customize the amount of communications (hourly, daily, weekly, etc.).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Establish a current, up to date, calendar on-line as a comprehensive calendar of events</li> <li>» Institute use of digital newsletter (and/or other social media) for daily, weekly, or monthly dispersal of important information</li> <li>» Use social media for information dispersal</li> <li>» Communicate all press releases about economic development, breaking news, road closures, etc.</li> </ul>				
<b>D. Develop a communications plan</b>	Primary	Short	Main Street Organization	
<p><i>Strategy: Establish a communications program targeting property owners and business owners in the area to keep them up to date and informed about current happenings.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Determine list of property owners and businesses</li> <li>» Create a constant stream of information of what is happening from the city government side</li> </ul>				